

GENDER LENS

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER ISSUE

GENDER LENS 13th Edition



Community Health Promoter, Mrs. Satima Haret speaking on drug and substance abuse among the youth in Garissa during MHPSS training in Garissa County held on Wednesday, August 16, 2023. (Image: Kaya)



CCGD West Pokot County Administrator, Ms. Irene Cheruto speaking on the importance of mitigating climate change as means to combat GBV FGM and other forms violence in West Pokot County. (Image: courtesy)

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A Centre for Policy Advocacy and Non-discrimination

Kajiado GBVRC Continues to Provide Hope for GBV Survivors



CCGD Kajiado County Administrator, Ms. Nashipae Seney, sharing information about the national GBV helpline, HAK-1195 with participants, during a legal aid clinic at the GBVRC. (Image: Michelle Katete, CCGD)

By Michelle Katete

Kajiado County Gender-Based Violence Recovery Centre (GBVRC) provides clinical psycho-social support and information services to survivors of GBV in the County.

Speaking during a quarterly legal aid clinic held at the GBVRC on August 11, 2023, Hellen Tima, the Clinical Officer at the GBVRC noted that the GBVRC has provided much-needed restoration and hope for the survivors of GBV in the county.

She added that the GBVRC is more than just a facility as it is a dedicated safe haven where survivors of gender-based violence can find solace, support, and the resources they need to heal and rebuild their lives.

“At its core, the GBVRC is a testament to the resilience of survivors and the collective determination to create a violence-free future. It is staffed with compassionate professionals who are committed to providing survivors with the help they need during their most challenging times,” said the Clinical Officer. Said Hellen Tima.

On her part, Rose Munene, a Nurse at the center, emphasized the importance of survivors seeking medical attention whenever they experience GBV. She underscored the significance of survivors undergoing

medical examinations, noting that these examinations not only assess physical injuries but also contribute to preserving vital forensic evidence that may be used as evidence in court. She added that survivors usually do not seek medical attention as a result of fear of reporting the cases to the police. However, she reassured the survivors that at the GBVRC, they will not face any discrimination if they fear reporting cases.

Ms. Diana Mwanzia, Human Rights Officer at CCGD, discouraged the practice of settling sexual offences in Kangaroo courts, often known as “chini ya mti” (under the tree) saying such practices are illegal, undermine survivors’ rights and perpetuate a culture of impunity.

The Kajiado GBVRC was established by the County Government of Kajiado with support from the Collaborative Centre and Gender Development (CCGD) to provide clinical and psycho-social services to SGBV survivors as well as boost the referral chain by supporting the collection and preservation of forensic evidence for the prosecution of cases.

Leveraging Youth Voices to Mitigate Climate Change

MARKING OF THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY WEBINAR
Theme: Green Skills for Youth: Towards a Sustainable World
Topic: Youth voice in mitigating climate change impacts

KALU LEPARIYO
YOUTH SENATOR
YOUTH SENATE KENYA

LESHAN KERETO
CHAIRPERSON
UNFPA YOUTH ADVISORY PANEL

CHRISTINE OGOLA
YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION OFFICER

GLORIA ELIZABETH
DEPUTY CEO
YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

FRIDAY | 4TH AUG 2023 | 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
 SCAN REGISTER AND JOIN THE CONVERSATION ADVANCE

Logos at the bottom include: Kenya Red Cross, UNFPA, TARETO AFRICA, and East African Civil Society Organizations' Forum.

A poster for the “Youth Voice in Mitigating Climate Change Impacts” webinar (Designed by Maurice Goga)

By Purity Jebor

The 2023 International Youth Day celebrations sort to harness youth voices to mitigate climate change and contribute to securing a sustainable future for all.

A seminar titled “Youth Voice in Mitigating Climate Change Impacts” on brought together youth across the country to deliberate on the involvement of the youth in mitigating climate change.

Speaking during the webinar, Christine Ogola, Climate Action Officer at the Kenya Red Cross called upon the national and county actors to equip the young people with tangible soft skills and knowledge related to sustainability and environmental conservation, a move she said will address the ravaging impacts of climate change in the country. She said the Kenya Redcross has a youth adaptation toolkit that is helping young people and women to understand climate change and take practical action to adapt to the changing climate in their community.

On the other hand, Gloria Elizabeth, Deputy CEO of the Youth Empowerment and Development Foundation, emphasized the importance of engaging young people in the climate conversation from an early stage. She urged stakeholders in the climate sector to invest in youth empowerment, enabling them to participate actively in discussions and actions related to climate change.

Leshan Kereto, Chairperson of the UNFPA Youth

Advisory Panel, said the adverse effects of climate change in Narok County have compelled the county government to provide 100% scholarships for 40 girls to ensure that these girls can continue their education.

On his part, Kalu Lepariyo, Youth Senator from Baringo County, lauded the active participation of youth in discussions related to climate change. He noted that their involvement will significantly contribute to shaping policies and frameworks aimed at mitigating climate change.

Similar conversations took place in Mombasa, West Pokot, Busia, Kwale, Kajiado and Baringo Counties as part of the commemoration of the 2023 International Day of Youth. During these events, young people actively engaged in conversations about their role in addressing climate change within their respective counties. Additionally, they established an accountability agenda to track the commitments made by their leaders in the fight against climate change.

CCGD with support from UNFPA Kenya and Mastercard Foundation contributed to supporting this year’s International Day of the Youth commemoration in Mombasa, West Pokot, Baringo, Kwale, Busia and Kajiado counties.

Navigating the dark side of the digital age



An illustration of “TF GBV” (Picture: Courtesy)

By Maurice Goga

The emergence and proliferation of Technology Facilitated GBV (TFGBV), poses a significant knowledge challenge to law enforcement agencies and other actors as they try to organize an appropriate response. A collaborative research initiative by CCGD and the University of Nairobi of Nairobi Women Economic Empowerment Hub (UON WEE Hub) with support from UNFPA is ongoing at tertiary institutions.

The study seeks to expand understanding of the current status and prevalence of TFGBV in Kenya, among students in selected tertiary institutions. It aims to gain insights into the TFGBV ecosystem including those affected, perpetrators and victims, and the triggering factors. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to law enforcement and other forms of response to manage TFGBV.

TFGBV encompasses various forms of violence and

harassment that are facilitated or perpetrated through digital means. Some key forms of TFGBV include cyberbullying, online harassment, non-consensual images, harassment through social media, tech-enabled domestic abuse, online trolling, sextortion, online impersonation, online stalking, digital coercion and online hate speech targeting individuals or groups based on their gender. TFGBV can have profound and lasting effects on victims’ mental and emotional well-being. The constant fear, anxiety, and humiliation they experience can lead to depression, social isolation, and even self-harm. Furthermore, TFGBV can deter individuals from fully participating in the digital world, limiting their access to education, employment opportunities, and social connections.

Addressing GBV and Mental Health risks in ASAL Counties



CCGD Garissa County Administrator, Ms. Zeiton Maalim (on the right), and CCGD Clinical Officer, Ms. Rebbecah Mmboga, engaged in a debriefing session with Garissa County MHPSS on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. (Image: Kaya)

By Jimnicks Njenga and Rebeccah Mmboga

More than 100 Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) hailing from four Arid and Semi-Arid Land (ASAL) counties – Turkana, Marsabit, Mandera, and Garissa – have undergone training to effectively respond to drought-induced Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) risks.

Speaking during the training session in Mandera County, Mr Abdiwahab Mohamed, Mandera County Chief Officer of Youth Sports Gender and Talent pointed out that the prevalence of GBV and harmful cultural practices remains alarmingly high in the county, citing a recent incident in which an infant was abandoned in a thicket. He urged both state and non-state actors to come together to raise awareness about GBV and mental health in the County. Mr Mohamed encouraged the Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) to take the lead in creating awareness about GBV within their communities.

In Garissa County, the Director of Health Administration, Mr. Mohammed Dagane issued a strong call to the community, urging them to refrain from using the maslaha court system to resolve disputes involving GBV cases. He highlighted that this alternative system exacerbates GBV issues in the county, ultimately affecting the mental health of individuals. The Assistant Director also delivered a stern warning to chiefs who recommend the use of the maslaha court system

for GBV cases, cautioning that they would be held accountable for their actions.

According to the CHVs the common forms of violence in the four ASAL counties include physical violence, wife inheritance, defilement, rape, early marriage, mental torture, financial violence, and FGM. Meanwhile, mental illness is often associated with beliefs in demons, curses, or witchcraft. In Mandera, Garissa, and Marsabit, the community believes that mental illness can be treated through reading Quranic scriptures to the affected individual as a form of exorcism or spiritual healing. In Turkana, many families choose to seek treatment from witch doctors or resort to prayer to address mental illness. Early marriages are sometimes influenced by the belief in the curative power of marriage, driven by a common perception of hysteria among young girls, especially in Garissa County. In some cases, mothers encourage their daughters to marry early, believing that having a husband can alleviate or cure hysteria.

With support from the Government of Japan and UNFPA Kenya, CCGD will continue to support ASAL counties to raise awareness on GBV and mental health.



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**East African Civil Society
Organizations' Forum**

*Strengthening Civil Society in the
Intergration Process*

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