



GENDER SECTOR WORKING GROUP FORUM

Strengthening public participation & influence of women, youth, and PWDs in county governance & budgeting processes in the county.

Kajiado - Field Report 22 -24 JUNE 2022

FIDA - KENYA

FEDERATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS IN KENYA



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ACRONYMS

CSOCivil Society Organisations
FGMFemale Genital Mutilation
IECInformation Educational Communication
PWDsPersons With Disabilities

INTRODUCTION

In partnership with UN Women and the County Government of Kajiado, FIDA-Kenya convened Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities from Kajiado County for a Gender Sector forum on 22nd and 23rd June 2022 at the Enchula Resort Hotel in Kajiado. The forum drew Gender officials, Police officers Manning Gender desks, and CSO representatives drawn from the county. The participants were convened as part of FIDA-Kenya's effort toward strengthening public participation & influence of women, youth, and PWDs in county governance & budgeting processes in the county.

This report summarizes the training proceedings highlighting lessons, challenges, recommendations for the program, and feedback from the participants.

DAY 1-22 JUNE 2022

Opening Remarks were done by Christine Jaji, Chief Officer, Gender Department. She appreciated the efforts of FIDA-Kenya in conjunction with UN Women to strengthen gender budgeting processing and public participation in Kajiado County. The representation was as follows; 10 men (inclusive of one Person with a disability), and 8 women.

Legislative & Policy frameworks on Public Participation

The objective of this session was to have the participants understand the legislative and policy frameworks on public participation budgeting. This session was led by Vivian Mwendu, Programme Officer FIDA-Kenya.

She gave a background of the project where she highlighted that the program has been implemented in four counties, Kajiado county being one of them. She underscored that the project was intended to cure the gaps in mobilization and public participation.

Citizen involvement in policy making and implementation promotes transparency and fosters accountability. Participants highlighted that citizen participation in the county is lagging with regard to the constitutional provisions on public participation.

She gave a breakdown of the legal framework governing public participation in Kenya and pointed out that the Constitution of Kenya provides for citizen participation under Article 118. At the county level, public participation is provided for under section 115 of the County Government Act. It states that public participation in the county planning processes shall be mandatory.

In addition, she mentioned that public participation in the county government is based upon certain principles. These include; timely access to information related to policy formulation, protection of the interest and rights of minorities and marginalized groups and their access to relevant information among others. This is enshrined under section 87 of the County Government Act.

Considering the above, the participants noted that though there is the Kajiado County Public Participation Bill, 2014, the county is yet to implement some of the provisions on public participation. The Bill further makes provisions for village leaders who are meant to assist ward administrators to mobilize for public participation however, this provision is yet to be operationalized.

The major concerns and challenges mentioned were-

- Low literacy levels have caused residents of Kajiado county not to attend public participation since they do not understand the process.
- The venues chosen for public participation are far thus not accessible to the community members.
- Kajiado County is vast and sparsely populated thus posing a challenge in mobilizing people to attend the public participation forums, forcing the county to consider sub-county public participation.
- The Kajiado community comprises of pastoralists who are nomadic in nature. Their movement from one place to another affect's quorum needed in public participation. This is currently being experienced in this quota due to high drought levels where they have been forced to move to other counties such as Makueni in search of water and pasture.
- Most members of the community want monetary incentive to take part in public participation. This in turn takes away from the purpose of public participation since it should be issue based and not facilitation based.
- Gender roles and responsibilities that require women in Kajiado county to milk cows have caused both socio-economic and participation challenges. Most Maasai women prefer to hold public participation after dairy farming while the public participation forums are conducted during business hours.
- There are no proper definitions in terms of public participation. The Kajiado Public Participation Bill, 2014 is not clear on the attendance number of women, youth and PWDs required for an effective public participation

Gender Responsive Budgeting

This session was facilitated by Vivian, and it covered gender-responsive budgeting with the objective of having the participants familiar with and be able to apply the types and purpose of gender budget statements and also be able to support departments in the preparation of gender budget statements and inclusion of youth and PWDs. She stated that in Kenya, the gender sector working group is diverse and is composed of CSOs, the National Police Service, Faith-based organizations, and PWDs among others.

Vivian engaged the members by asking about their understanding of the difference between gender and sex. She explained that sex refers to the biological features of females, males, and intersex persons while gender includes the roles and responsibilities associated with being a man, woman, girl, or boy. It was highlighted that there is a general misconception that gender only deals with women's issues.

The participants shared their experiences on the budgeting process within Kajiado County with regard to women, youth, and people with disabilities. Their main issue was that in Kajiado, gender matters are not taken with much weight during budgeting, thus being given the last priority. Christine Jaji, the Chief Officer of, the Gender Department stated that the gender department is allocated the least amount in budgeting. Currently, only 9 million shillings (Kshs 9,000,000) have been allocated to run the gender department in Kajiado county thus proving difficult for the department to effectively carry out its duties.

Dr. Leina Mpoke, the County Executive Committee member in charge of the Gender sector in Kajiado stated that there is a backlog in tackling gender issues in the county due to a lack of development funding. The only funds available are on recurrent expenditure thus forcing the county's gender department to leave cases such as Gender-Based Violence to be handled by Civil Society Organizations.

Moses Tenik, a gender officer in Kajiado county stated that there is a lack of synergy between the gender department and other departments. This has caused a lack of support to the gender department while addressing pertinent issues affecting the community.

Lack of support from political leaders was cited as a major challenge, especially during this quota where elections are impending. This is evidenced by political candidates pushing for manifestos that hardly touch on gender issues, an indicator that the topic of gender has still not gained traction among leaders in Kajiado county.

There is a lack of diversity in gender programs in Kajiado County. Currently, there are only two programs in the county. These are Gender mainstreaming and the Socioeconomic empowerment program. These programs are insufficient to address and cater to all gender needs affecting the county.

Despite having the two programs mentioned above, mainstreaming gender issues is still a major challenge in the county. This is because it is viewed as unnecessary due to the misconception that gender issues are less compared to other issues affecting the community.

Budgeting Processes – Experience Sharing

This session covered experience sharing of budgeting processes within Kajiado County with emphasis on women, youth, and PWDs. The experiences shared by the participants were classified as follows-

a) Women

- A large number of women lack awareness of the need for public participation, and their rights to take part in such forums. This has led to the lack of gender inclusivity with regard to gender budgeting processes.
- Patriarchy- there is a high level of patriarchy in Kajiado county causing women in the area to leave decision-making king to men because the man is viewed the as head of the household, thus giving him complete autonomy to make decisions affecting the family/society This limits the women's decision- making power in matters on gender budgeting.
- Inadequate resource allocation- there are insufficient resources assigned by the county government to empower the women. Most of the resources are allocated towards issues such as infrastructure and gender/ women issues are given the last priority.

b) Youth

- Low literacy levels causing the youths not to understand the meaning and need for gender budgeting.
- High levels of unemployment have caused the youth to lose faith in the county government and the gender budgeting process.
- Low economic empowerment amongst the youth caused by lack of employment is a major challenge facing the youth.

c) PWDs

- There are no policies implemented by the county government providing for persons with disabilities. A Bill (Kajiado Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2017) was tabled; however, it was not passed.
- Insufficient financial allocation- Only 10 million Shillings (Kshs 10,000,000) have been allocated for Persons with disabilities in the entire county of Kajiado.
- Persons with disabilities in the county are catered for under the social services department instead of the gender department. This poses a challenge since the latter is best suited to address their issues with efficiency and the urgency required.
- Lack of awareness amongst the persons with disabilities on their rights is a major problem in the county. This has led to high levels of complacency and a lack of major changes regarding their inclusion in the budgeting process in the county.
- Lack of capacity building and inappropriate resource allocation- Only three sign language interpreters have been deployed in the county offices. This has been quite a challenge to PWDs because there is insufficient manpower to cater to their needs across the county.

Recommendations

1. Increase the budget allocation for the Department of Gender in Kajiado county, particularly on development funding. Due to the lack of funds, the department is unable to contribute effectively in addressing gender-specific issues.
2. Capacity building on all focal points around public participation and gender-responsive budgeting. This is essential since it will provide the necessary skills required to tackle the gender imbalances and promote development in the county.
3. There is a need for more physical/tangible projects run by the gender sector working group., This is an effective strategy for obtaining more funding, with more projects being traced back to the gender department.
4. CSOs need to put a united front and synergize in advocating for gender-responsive budgeting.
5. There is a need to develop more understandable IEC materials. The words used must be simple and most preferably in the local language to cater to the illiterate.
6. Invest in civic education to diffuse the mindsets/ cultures embedded in the society regarding public participation and gender budgeting. This will empower the categories of the targeted participants to come out and voice their issues.

Successes

- The county government of Kajiado has managed to mainstream issues on disabilities and has set aside a fund for persons with disabilities.
- Through the Fund, the county has supported over 52 persons with disabilities with bursaries from primary school to Technical and Vocational Education and Training colleges.
- The county has reached out to over 200 PWDs with assorted devices ranging from wheel chairs, crutches, prosthetics, and hearing aids among others.
- The county has employed PWDs in the county offices; for instance, the Deputy Assistant Director for disability needs, a disability social services officer, and a secretary.
- The county has partnered with the county's department of health to reach over 150 children with autism and cerebral palsy for the provision of nutritional supplements, assessment, and corrective surgery.
- The county has formed an administration unit that manages citizen participation processes.
- Deployment of citizen participation officers in the sub-county offices.
- Kajiado county has enacted a citizen participation policy to guide the process of public participation.
- Over 2000 girls have benefited from the provision of dignity kits and mentorship, especially during the pandemic period.
- Support over 1500 PWDs with food through the emergency kitty within the county government.
- The county enacted the Kajiado County FGM Policy, 2019 which provides a framework for the eradication of FGM by sensitizing the community that FGM is illegal and a violation of human rights
- The county enacted the Kajiado County Alcoholic Drinks Control Act to provide for the licensing and regulation of the production, sale and distribution of alcoholic drinks.

DAY 2 -23rd JUNE 2022

Opening Remarks were done by Dr. Leina Mpoke, the County Executive Committee member in charge of the Gender sector in Kajiado. He appreciated the efforts of FIDA-Kenya and UN Women in strengthening the gender budgeting process and public participation in Kajiado County.

Preliminaries

The training began with introductions and context settings. FIDA-Kenya program Officer, Elizabeth Gichohi, led the session by giving a brief overview of the organization. She highlighted the history of the institution, its vision, mission, and its different departments and programs. The objective of this session was to give the participants a background of who and what FIDA-Kenya does so as to set up pace for the day's agenda.

Legislative & Policy frameworks on public participation budgeting

The objective of this session was to have the participants understand the legislative and policy frameworks on public participation budgeting. This session was led by Vivian Mwendu, Programme Officer FIDA-Kenya.

She gave a background of the project where she highlighted that the program has been implemented in four counties, Kajiado county being one of them. Vivian gave the rationale for public participation by citing Article 1 (1), the Constitution of Kenya, which provides for the sovereignty of the people. This is the foundation that all the people of Kenya regardless of their status have a voice and have the right to have that voice heard.

Further, Article 174 (c) of the Constitution provides that the object of devolution is to enhance the participation of people in the exercise of the powers of the state and in making decisions affecting them. Devolution is the delegation of powers by the National government to the County government. For counties such as Kajiado, public participation is provided for under the County Government Act.

She then outlined the conditions to be met in an effective public participation process such as; access to information, inclusive and effective representation, and complete transparency among others.

Gender Responsive Budgeting

This session was facilitated by Vivian, and it covered gender-responsive budgeting with the objective of having the participants familiar with and be able to apply the types and purpose of gender budget statements and also be able to support departments in the preparation of gender budget statements and inclusion of youth and PWDs. Vivian engaged the participants by asking them the difference between gender and sex. She explained that sex is based on biological characteristics while gender is the role and responsibilities assigned to someone on basis of their sex.

Gender roles differ from one place to another therefore, there's a need for gender-responsive budgets on the county level. Vivian explained that this type of budgeting does not involve creating separate budgets for women, youths, and PWDs but rather seeks to address the pertinent equalities between these groups by equally serving their priorities.

She also defined the term 'budget' by stating that it is an estimate of income and expenditure for a set period of time. She underscored that resources are limited and therefore a budget helps prioritize spending. In addition, she explained that the budget process is sub-divided into three main stages- budget preparation, budget implementation, and budget monitoring and evaluation.

With regard to budget allocation to counties, she explained that 30% of the national revenue is allocated to county governments. Vivian emphasized that the gender sector working group must always pay keen attention to the amount allocated to the gender department in Kajiado to ensure that they make proper plans and implementation processes.

Budgeting Processes- Experience Sharing

This session covered experience sharing of budgeting processes within Kajiado County with emphasis on women, youth, and PWDs. Vivian tasked the participants with a group activity where they would discuss the following-

- What are the proposed projects that will benefit; women, youth, and PWDs?
- What are the current projects that have benefited; women, youth and PWDs?
- What are the challenges facing; women, youth and PWDs?

a) Proposed projects that will benefit; women, youth and PWDs.

The following table highlights the outcome of the group activity and views of the participants regarding the same.

Women	Youth	PWDs
1. Water. -Boreholes to be drilled at least 5km square from homesteads to economically empower women through agri-business. -- Women can use water to grow vegetables around their homestead and earn money from it.	1. Allocating more funds for youths to empower them economically e.g., to support viable business ideas tabled by youths.	1. Trainings and Workshops for PWDS on their rights and the benefits of having their names registered at the National Council of People with Disabilities
2. Equipping health facilities with an ambulance per ward and fully equipping the health facilities. - To enable women easily access health services and reduce high maternal mortality rates.	2. Vocational training to youths on technical skills e.g., carpentry, boda-boda business, etc.	2. Creating provisions and a policy requiring all commercial buildings to maintain a PWD friendly environment e.g., erecting ramps on all buildings
3. Women Economic Empowerment Programmes. - Including free trainings on skills such as-Modern Beadwork, sewing etc to enable women to sustain themselves and support their children.	3. Rehabilitation centers for youths affected by drug abuse	3. Adjustable beds in health/ maternal facilities to cater for PWDs.
4. Outreaches and trainings to women groups on Family Planning.	4. Gender mainstreaming in public participation.	4. Deployment of sign language interpreters in every county office.
5. Civic Education to women on public participation.	5. Workshops for youth to build on their skills and creation of employment.	
6.Workshops encouraging women to join cooperatives.	6. Equipping Youth-friendly centers relating to health in every sub- county.	

b). Current projects that have benefited; women, youth and PWDs.

The table below outlines the participants' experiences concerning the same.

Women	Youth	PWDs
1. Training in bookkeeping.	1.Provision of sanitary pads in schools.	1.Provision of gadgets and equipment e.g., hearing aids, wheelchairs, among others.
2. Training in beadwork, tailoring and catering.	2.Youth development fund. - Has empowered the youth to create their own employment opportunities.	2. Cash transfer for Persons with Severe Disabilities program. -Has enabled households access improved nutrition, healthcare, housing and education.
3. Construction of ushanga shades (beadwork shades).		3. Sports for the physically challenged. -Maintains an all- inclusive environment in sports.
4. Provision of re-usable sanitary towels.		Scholarships (Uwezo & Faulu scholarships for children in high schools).
5 Kajiado Uwezo Fund. -Provides women access to individual and group loans to enhance their business.		5. Bursaries for primary school-going children living with disabilities.
		6. Physiotherapy center in Kajiado County Referral Hospital.

c). Challenges facing; women, youth and PWDs

Participants outlined the challenges as follows-

Women	Youth	PWDs
1. High illiteracy levels.	1. Lack of awareness on public participation of youth in the budgeting process.	1. Chiefs not working hand in hand with the community to protect the interests of PWDs.
2. Sexual and Gender-based violence.	2. Youths are not being meaningfully involved in Sexual Reproductive Health Rights Campaigns.	2. Funds allocated for PWDs are insufficient.
3. Patriarchy. -Men control the women on decision-making.	3. Unemployment.	3. Lack of Disability Mainstreaming Policies.
4. Dependency on spouses	4. Low awareness on family planning methods.	4. Lack of inclusivity in schools to accommodate persons with disability.
5. No ready market for beadwork.	5. Non- functional youth hubs in the county.	5. There are only 3 sign language interpreters in the county offices.

Recommendations

- Officers manning the gender desks should be trained.
- The county government of Kajiado can utilize youth to reach out to the community members for example, through truck drive campaigns through towns and villages to create awareness.
- The Ward level administrators are required to be trained because they are very key in coordinating and facilitating citizen participation in the development of policies and implementation.
- Value addition of milk and dairy products to improve the livelihoods of the citizens of Kajiado county who mostly thrive on pastoralism.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORUM - 24th June 2022

Introduction

In partnership with UN Women and the County Government of Kajiado, FIDA-Kenya convened Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities from Kajiado County for a public participation forum on 24th June 2022 at Esidai Hotel in Kajiado. The forum drew 100 members of the community, representatives from Civil Society Organizations, and representatives from the National Police Service from the county. The participants were convened as part of FIDA-Kenya's effort toward strengthening public participation & influence of women, youth, and PWDs in county governance & budgeting processes in the county.

Opening remarks were done by Dr. Leina Mpoke who appreciated the participants for showing initiative in exercising their constitutional right of public participation and gave accolades to FIDA-Kenya and UN Women for their great effort.

Preliminaries

The forum began with introductions and context settings. FIDA-Kenya program Officer, Elizabeth Gichohi, led the session by giving a brief overview of the organization. She highlighted the history of the institution, its vision, mission, and its different departments and programs. The objective of this was to give the participants a background of who and what FIDA-Kenya does so as to set up the pace for the day's agenda.

Legislative Framework & The need for gender-inclusive budgets.

This session was led by Vivian Mwende, Programme Officer FIDA-Kenya. It was aimed at shedding light on the legislative framework on public participation and the need for gender-inclusive budgets. She explained the legal framework governing public participation and emphasized that the citizens of Kenya have the right to participate and it is their civic obligation to engage in all county governance processes. She stated that public participation is a constitutional requirement specifically, Article 1 provides that sovereign power belongs to the people. She outlined the principles of public participation as provided under sections 87-92 and 115 of the County Governments Act, 2012.

In addition, Vivian explained that the forum was necessary for informing the public by providing information on gender budgeting processes, involving the public to ensure that their concerns are considered and addressed by the relevant stakeholders in the county, and empowering the public through information.

She engaged the members of the public by asking them the difference between gender and sex. She then explained to them that gender is socially constructed and is defined by roles and responsibilities associated with being a man, boy, girl, or woman. On the other hand, sex is defined by biological characteristics.

In light of gender budget processes, Vivian explained the meaning of a budget and the need to have gender-inclusive budgets in the county. She urged the participants to always be vigilant and to take keen interest in budgetary processes in the county because a gender-inclusive budget is not only beneficial for women but for every member of society.

Budgeting Processes – Experience sharing

This session was led by Jane, a Civil Society representative. It covered experience sharing of budgeting processes within Kajiado County with emphasis on women, youth, and PWDs.

The participants shared the following challenges-

- Accessing bursaries by the youth is a huge challenge in the county and this has derailed the education of the affected parties.
- Lack of awareness among the public, on public participation has led to a lack of concern on the budgetary processes and the implementation of the set policies.
- Non- involvement of the greater public/ majority during public participation.
- Participants spoke on instances where public participation forums are conducted privately between the policymakers and a select few. This clearly beats the purpose of public participation since every person regardless of their status has a right to participate and the requirement of transparency.
- Lack of effective communication channels- participants shared that most calls for public participation are done via channels inaccessible to them such as newspapers.
- Patriarchy- women have left the decision-making to men and thus an imbalance of views regarding gender budgeting.

Recommendations

- Public participation should be done in open spaces where everyone's input can be heard and addressed.
- Information needs to be accessible and presented in appropriate forms.
- More creation of awareness is to be done to ensure that citizens and all relevant stakeholders are informed of their rights to citizen participation.
- Governing bodies should take active steps to cater for the needs of youth, women and PWDs during budgeting.