**Trainer's Reflections – Makueni, Narok, Kajiado, Kisumu, Kwale and Busia CSOs Workshop on the Gender Responsive Budgeting and Movement-Building**

Following a successful engagement and sensitization of CSOs network across the six counties on the Gender Responsive Budget and movement building, I’m pleased to make the following observations.

Active Participation and Engagement:

One of the most encouraging aspects of the workshop was the active participation and engagement of the CSOs and CBOs. The participants demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting gender justice and addressing SGBV issues in their respective counties. Their willingness to share experiences, challenges, and strategies created a vibrant and dynamic learning environment. It was quite encouraging to learn from both networks on some of the things that were working well for them, things that were not working well and suggested areas for improvement. Even though, Kajiado seemed to be a bit behind in terms of their engagement with the county government on certain aspects like budget advocacy, they got very valuable insights from their counterparts from Kisumu and I believe the shared experiences shall go along way to strengthen their advocacy work.

Multi-Sectoral Approach (MSA) Collaboration:

The workshop provided a platform for stakeholders from various sectors to come together and discuss their roles in addressing SGBV. It was evident that the MSA approach has the potential to enhance collaboration and coordination among stakeholders. For instance, Kisumu network has successfully negotiated for a seat in the Gender Technical Working Committee and they’ve been able to influence certain decision through that platform. Also, it is worth noting that the Kisumu network has decentralized their activities to the sub-county level thus are able to influence key decision as the lowest level. However, it also highlighted the need to further strengthen these platforms, ensuring that all relevant actors are actively engaged and their contributions effectively utilized.

Importance of Community Mobilization:

The discussions reaffirmed the critical role of CSOs and CBOs in community mobilization and awareness-raising in a community of practice. Their close proximity to grassroots communities allows them to witness the challenges faced by women and girls firsthand and address them using the locally available solutions. In Kisumu, the network has developed a warm working relationship with the police, health facilities and local administration and through this partnership, they have been able to address cases of SGBV promptly. Participants emphasized the need to expand community engagement efforts and reach more marginalized groups to ensure a comprehensive response to SGBV.

Significance of Gender-Responsive Budgeting:

The workshop served as a valuable opportunity to reintroduce CSOs and CBOs to the concept of gender-responsive budgeting. Participants recognized the importance of aligning budgets with gender concerns and prioritizing resources for SGBV prevention and response programs. They expressed a strong commitment to actively engage in the budget-making process and advocate for gender-responsive budgets at the county level.

Networking and Collaboration:

Throughout the workshop, participants actively networked and built relationships with fellow CSOs, CBOs, and other stakeholders. The sense of camaraderie and collective purpose was inspiring to witness. It is evident that the workshop not only provided a space for capacity-building but also served as a catalyst for collaboration and the strengthening of the CSO network.

Moving forward, it is crucial to ensure continued support and follow-up for the CSOs and CBOs. This includes providing technical assistance, mentoring, and opportunities for knowledge sharing and collaboration. Additionally, efforts should be made to monitor and evaluate the impact of the workshop and the subsequent action plans developed. Regular feedback loops and learning exchanges will help sustain momentum and foster continuous improvement.

Overall, the Kajiado & Kisumu CSOs Workshop on the County Budgeting Process and Movement-Building was a significant step towards enhancing the capacity of CSOs and CBOs in promoting gender justice and addressing SGBV. The dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment displayed by the participants give me confidence that the workshop will have a positive and lasting impact on the lives of women and girls in Kisumu and Kajiado Counties.