

# REPORT ON THE BICYCLES INITIATIVE PLANNING MEETINGS

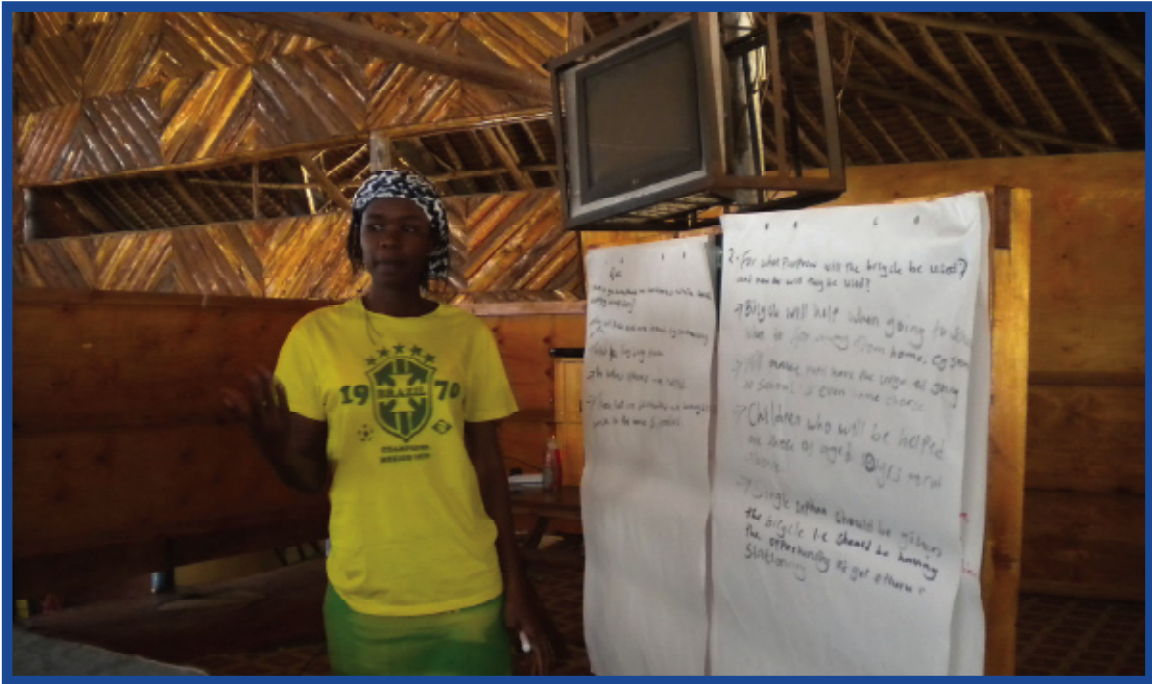
Held on 15th - 18th February in Kisumu County



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*A youth explaining problems faced by the orphaned girl child*

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

KELIN is currently implementing a project known as “Working with Cultural Structures to Ensure Access to Justice by Widows and Orphans” in Nyakach, Muhoroni, South Rachunyo (Kabondo) and Nyando Districts in Nyanza Province. This project is being undertaken in conjunction with the Open Society Foundation (OSF), Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, the Health Policy Initiative, the Luo Council of Elders, and the Nyakach Elders. The Cultural Structures project seeks to address the legal and human rights concerns of widows, orphans and other vulnerable groups in the community with regard to property inheritance and ownership. The project aims to utilize community structures (Luo Council of Elders and community elders/leaders) to boost the right to access, own and inherit property. The project has helped resettle over 30 widows and their orphans who had been disinherited thus denied the right to own and inherit property.

Even after the resettlement process, the children and especially school going girls have had to walk long distances in lonely areas, putting them at risk of getting assaulted. To curb this, the initiative to purchase bicycles to be given to identified school going children, especially daughters of the vulnerable widows participating in the culture project was hatched.

KELIN works from a Rights Based Approach and the need to protect girls from Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) has been one of the needs identified by the culture project. It is envisioned that these bicycles will assist the girls get to school faster, get home early and run other errands like fetching water from the river in a more convenient manner.

This will release a lot of time spent on the road walking for tens of kilometres, and redirect it to focus on their education. It will also enhance the implementation of the ongoing work with cultural structures programme that seeks to protect the rights of women and children. Consequently their vulnerability to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) will be reduced.

The 64 participants were drawn from the Community Based Organizations (CBOs) collaborating with KELIN, women elders

from the cultural structures engaged by KELIN to solve widows and orphans disinheritance issues, youth groups and orphans or guardians of orphans.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

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Participants introduced themselves by citing their names, where they came from, their expectations and mentioning at least two problems that are faced by widows and orphans in the village.

### 2.1 EXPECTATIONS

- a. Learn from one another.
- b. Gain knowledge to share with others back at home.
- c. Learn how to cope with widow problems.
- d. Know elders role in project.
- e. Know CBOs role in the culture project.
- f. Know whether KELIN can provide training for CBOs collaborating with the project
- g. Bicycles to be distributed.
- h. Know about KELIN
- i. Acquire knowledge on how to tackle widows and orphans problems
- j. Agree on giving orphans from far bicycles.

### 2.2 PROBLEMS FACED BY WIDOWS AND ORPHANS

- Long distances to school.
- Lack of school fees [Leading to taking loans which cannot be repaid].
- Poor housing.
- Lack of food hence having to go hungry most of the time.
- Abuse of their Rights e.g. disinheritance.
- Lack of respect for widows.
- Lack of school uniform.
- Widows being neglected by families for example nobody bothers to assist when their houses collapse.
- Name calling of widows [prostitutes].
- Girl child exploited / taken advantage of in exchange of little gains then ending up infected and dropping out of school.
- Older orphans giving up on education to fend for the others.

The chair/facilitator who still is the project coordinator then took the group through the problems stated to try and identify some solutions for the same.

They were informed that it was the duty of the Government to ensure that most of their concerns are solved from; security to other necessities like education. Further, they were informed that it was their duty to claim their rights through the proper channels. They were encouraged to approach their area members of parliament for school fees from the Constituency Development Fund(CDF) kitty.

They were advised on the need to network with and approach NGOs which provide assistance in terms of school fees and other school related benefits e.g. Omega foundation in Nyando and Foreningen in Kabondo.

Also, seeking assistance from elders in cases where they felt other community members are violating their rights with regard to cultural aspects was encouraged,

### 3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNITY:

1. Involve the community at the planning stage for ownership and sustainability purposes.
2. Discuss and agree on criteria for selection of beneficiaries.
3. Discuss and agree on the purposes for the bicycles and how they will be maintained.

### RATIONALE

Participants were then taken through the rationale behind the bicycles initiative.

The chair started by introducing KELIN and explaining why the culture project and working with elders. She gave the example of the widow - *Sopiato* as illustrated in the tool on working with cultural structures<sup>1</sup>. In this example, the Maasai elders' decision to allow *Sopiato* have part of the matrimonial property after her husband's death confirms the power of culture and how even after resettlement, the girl child still needs to be facilitated in order to cope with the load of work which denies them fairness as they pursue their education.

They were given the background as stated in 1.1 above.

This was followed by watching a documentary produced by KELIN.



*Participants watching the KELIN video on cultural structures project*

<sup>1</sup>

Available [http://kelinkenya.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Working-with-Cultural-Structures-A4\\_FINAL.pdf](http://kelinkenya.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Working-with-Cultural-Structures-A4_FINAL.pdf)

## 4.0 GROUP WORK

Participants then went into groups where they discussed the following questions.

- a. What do you think should be considered while identifying beneficiaries?
- b. For what purposes will the bicycles be used and how will they be maintained?

### 4.1 GROUP REPORTS/ RECOMMENDATIONS



*Participants during discussion and presentation*

### 4.2 CRITERIA OF BENEFICIARY SELECTION

Below is the criteria agreed upon on the selection of beneficiaries:

- a. Must be corruption free.
- b. Regional balance must be taken into account.
- c. Beneficiaries shall be orphaned girls.
- d. Must be school going.
- e. They will have to be orphans from the project site who are staying and going to school there.
- f. Must be a child of a widow who has been resettled or where there are no such orphans then a child of a widow who has been participating in KELIN activities or if non still meets the criteria then the next most vulnerable orphaned girls from the district shall be considered.
- g. Must be of an age that can ride and take care of the bicycle. 12 to 17 years [ std 6 to form four]
- h. Fourth formers to leave for those continuing if there are any.
- i. In cases where two qualify from the same family then they use in turns or one to carry the other at the back.
- j. Must be facing difficulties of travelling long distances
- k. The orphan's background must be known and approved by the elders [as a group].
- l. Should avail death certificates of late parents but status can be approved in cases where the same are missing.
- m. The orphan must be interested in going to school.

- n. She/he must be interested in having the bicycle and be ready to take good care of it.
- o. Beneficiaries should be respectful children.

### **4.3 PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE BICYCLES SHALL BE USED**

- a. Going to school.
- b. Fetching water.
- c. Going to grind floor.
- d. Running errands when sent.
- e. In exceptional cases like emergency to take patient to hospital.

### **4.4 MAINTENANCE**

- a. Choose elder and one widow to monitor usage
- b. Guardians to assist in taking care and ensuring correct usage.
- c. Have proper place to keep it.
- d. KELIN to assist within the first six months.
- e. Orphans must take care / charge of the bicycles just like their books.
- f. Bicycles to be taken for service even before getting spoilt.
- g. Avoid overloading
- h. Buy and use bicycle lock for security.
- i. To be labled 'Donated by KELIN and OSF', so that in cases where they are being used for the wrong purposes like bicycle taxiing [Bodaboda ] they are taken away.

## 5.0 WAY FORWARD

The following issues were agreed upon as the way forward:

- i. Bicycles are not sold at the project sites therefore KELIN to purchase them from Kisumu.
- ii. The bicycles to be suited for use by ladies for purposes of comfort.
- iii. Monitoring of the bicycles usage and whether they are making a difference in the orphan's lives shall be done by two volunteers from each of the project sites.

Below are the selected volunteers.

- a. Eunice Juma / Consolata Adhiambo Otieno - Muhoroni
- b. Margaret Omwa/ Ascah Madote - Nyakach
- c. Mary Omolo / Alice Musingo - Kabondo
- d. Josephine Ong'ombe / Jane Oyieko - Nyando

## 6.0 LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

No	Name	Position
1.	Consolata A. Otieno	Widow
2.	Milka A. Odhiambo	Widow
3.	Dorice L. Asoo	Guardian
4.	Everline A. Odongo	Widow
5.	Alice A. Odhiambo	Widow
6.	Atieno Everline Otieno	Widow
7.	Judith M. Okeyo	Widow
8.	Eunice Juma	Elder
9.	Rose Manyalla	Guardian
10.	Ruth Achieng	L.C.E
11.	Josephine Ong'ombe	Elder
12.	Lilian Atieno	Widow
13.	Pamela Oliech	Guardian
14.	Grace Awino	Youth
15.	Molly Achieng	Youth
16.	Philgona Awuor	Widow
17.	Lucia Onyango	Widow
18.	Sadaah Kassim	Widow
19.	Margaret Odongo	Guardian
20.	Mary Okoth	widow
21.	Atieno Rose	Orphan

22.	Joan Aluoch	St. Monica
23.	Emily Ongoro	St. Monica
24.	Margaret Omwa	St. Monica
25.	Pamella Aoko	Widow
26.	Faridah Ogallo	Widow
27.	Maseline Awino	Guardian
28.	Caroline Ajwang	Widow
29.	Molyn Okoyo	Orphan
30.	Aska Madote	Guardian
31.	Zilpa Nyong'o	Widow
32.	Jane Rose Oduor	Widow
33.	Ruth Okal	Widow
34.	Rodah Nafula	Widow
35.	Jane Oyieko	Guardian
36.	Mary Otieno	Widow
37.	Trufosa Ombija	Widow
38.	Dorothy Wanga	Widow
39.	Mary Adoyo	Guardian
40.	Karen Agutu	Guardian
41.	Janet Okumu	NOWA
42.	Rukia Ismael	Youth
43.	Purity Achieng	Youth
44.	Lucky Nyaema	Youth
45.	Ruth A. Odhiambo	L.C.E
46.	Sarah Oron	NOWA
47.	Siprosa Moro	Widow
48.	Teresia Awino	Widow
49.	Dolphina Aluoch	Widow
50.	Mary A. Omolo	KWDG
51.	Dorcas Nyagol	KWDG
52.	Scholastca Ogai	Orphan
53.	Rose Auma Ayodo	Guardian
54.	Margaret Awiti	Widow
55.	Pamela Okoth	Widow
56.	Seline Otieno	Widow
57.	Mourine Ochieng	Widow

58.	Alice Musingo	St. Christine
59.	Pamela Achieng	Widow
60.	Susan Onyango	Guardian
61.	Jecinta Aketch	Orphan
62.	Julia Aoko	Widow
63.	Emelda Ogutu	Orphan
64.	Eunia Dete	Guardian
65.	Jane Okello	Widow
66.	Emily Awuor	KELIN
67.	Ondeng Nancy	KELIN



*The Project Coordinator of the Cultural Structures Project explains the outcome of the meeting to elders*