

## **BEST PRACTICES FROM FACODE:**

FACODE in its attempt to promote basic human rights, it has come up with an initiative to promote the rights of the rural woman specifically creating awareness about preventing all forms of violence against women. FACODE is currently implementing a project of Engaging men to Prevent Violence against Women. In implementing this project, FACODE has employed a number of strategies which have been proved tangible in causing a difference given the fact that the organization lacks resources to ably finance project activities. These best practices have helped FACODE to forge through despite such challenges and they can be looked at as below;

1. **Involving of community members and stakeholders:** FACODE has looked at community's participation and involvement as being important in causing a difference and capturing peoples support for the project. We involved local community women and youth groups in identification of the problem, the causes and effects of VAW and our roles in the project. Because of this, local people have contributed to the project by accepting to be trained (acquire knowledge) and they cater for their own meals and do not ask for any allowances. This reason alone has shown a spirit of ownership of the project. The sub county leadership is also very supportive in that they have given us free structures to use especially the sub county hall without any pay and restrictions. Therefore involving community members and stakeholders right from identification of the problem to implementation makes work easier for people to be mobilized and self driven in doing human rights work.
2. **Using/involving men to reach fellow men:** FACODE trained 15 men to men volunteers (change makers) who have helped to reach out to fellow men and discuss with them the importance of violence free homes and communities. This is a best practice in that it helps men to open up to fellow men than to women, it also encourages men to be role models or change makers and it encourages men (abusers) to seek support and guidance than to be violent. Using this strategy our change makers have been able to get more men approaching them seeking for advise and guidance than before, (the number of women seeking help has also reduced), this implies that men are now finding it easy to open up and break the silence of looking at VAW as a private issue.
3. **Reaching out to men in their most convenient places:** FACODE has also looked at meeting men in places where they feel safe and convenient, especially their places of work, in beer parties or drinking places, bars, carpentry workshops, brick making areas.

At the very start of the project we encouraged our change makers to not only wait for men to come to them but also meet them where they are. This is so because men do not find it easy attending organized workshops claiming they are looking for what to feed their families on and still due to the inability for FACODE to hold full day and timely workshops and seminars due to inadequate resources to facilitate hiring venues, catering for meals and other allowances. Therefore meeting them where they are is of great importance and helps them speak freely to the change makers due to the manageable numbers met at a time.

4. **Use of focused stories and case studies:** due to the limited time we have with the community members in the half day trainings and other informal meetings by the change makers, we have successfully used case studies and stories to provoke good reflections and insights of what could be happening in another community and how it was handled or solved. After such a story/case study we pose simple questions like: what do you think was the cause of the misunderstanding? Who was in wrong? If faced with the same situation how can you handle it without causing violence? Have we heard/seen such kinds of situations in this community? How can you help a couple or family facing such a problem? By the end of such a discussion you find that a lot of issues will have been discussed and that other men and women end up confessing and denouncing such negative behaviours and attitudes if they really have them. This practice also helps men to learn from other peoples experiences and in the long run become change makers. This practice is also interactive that every body contributes and does not even require a lot of explanation of difficult concepts to make people understand what you mean to say.

With the above best practices, I would think FACODE has done preferably much despite the fact that it does not have any donor funds, because these practices are cost effective and does not require a lot of time on the part of the change makers and staff to use, they are also interactive and generate a lot of information.

However men are still slow at opening up and talking about Violence in their homes, this call for urgent need for more training to change makers in counseling, effective listening, deepening their understanding in issues of human rights, reporting and documentation.