

**Kamila Montesinos**

GenNext Fellow, Kamila Montesinos, shares her reflections on her second impactful journey with her host organization, Save the Children, to participate in a training session for the "Girls Decide" program in Nairobi, Kenya.

Early this December, I had the absolute pleasure of traveling to Nairobi, Kenya, to participate in Save the Children's *Girls Decide* Training of Trainers (ToT). The *Girls Decide* program is a curriculum designed for the protection and empowerment of girls affected by migration and displacement, so they can have safer journeys and better outcomes.

Alongside 25 Save the Children staff members from different country and regional offices, I was immersed in a transformative and collaborative learning environment



Girls Decide facilitators and participants gather for a group photo.

to explore the *Girls Decide* program, with the goal to equip staff to recruit and train female, community-based facilitators who would deliver the curriculum to girls of different ages and backgrounds in local settings.

The ToT was full of thoughtful engagement and collaboration. We began delving into the curriculum's modules, addressing the requirements and key principles for the program, providing space for us to brainstorm ways to contextualize and adapt the content as needed, to ensure the inclusion and safety for all girls.

It was particularly helpful to hear from colleagues who have already been part of early program implementations

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and to learn from their firsthand insights and fieldwork. These experiences provided invaluable perspectives on strategies to improve the curriculum and ensure that no girl feels left behind.

The group work was critical to our immersion of the content, including roleplay sessions where we designed activities from specific modules, and



Kamila presenting as a facilitator during one of the roleplay activities.

then acted out its facilitation with other groups acting as the girls. These exercises sparked meaningful discussions and inspired creative ideas for tailoring the curriculum to different cultural and social contexts, proving the adaptability of the modules.

We reflected on several other elements of the program throughout the week, such as what makes a good *Girls Decide* facilitator, addressing

challenging questions that could arise from its implementation, engaging with communities, and the corresponding MEAL (monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning) framework and tools that should be used.

I was so happy to have been able to provide some logistical support to the facilitators of the training during



Kamila pictured with the facilitators of the week, Nakhungu Magero, Ana Bustinduy Amador, and GESJ team member Sandra Johansson.

the set-up of the ToT, as well as co-facilitating and leading end-of-day activities. This helped push me out of my comfort zone, enhancing my confidence and strengthening my facilitation skills. And I couldn't have asked to do it with a more amazing group!

Though it was a short week, it was an incredibly impactful one. Collaborating and learning from the other participants was truly one of the most rewarding aspects of the week for me. With such a diverse group of experienced leaders in gender equality, I gained a wealth of knowledge from their expertise and past involvement in this work.

I am extremely grateful to have built connections with such kind and inspiring leaders, solidifying bonds I will cherish and extend throughout my career. I am so thankful to have been a part of this training, gained these connections and had the opportunity to explore the beautiful city of Nairobi.



Kamila enjoys a day off feeding giraffes at the Giraffe Center in Nairobi

I have such a deepened appreciation for the programs Save the Children develops to help ensure the inclusion and safety for all children, like this one.

I'm looking forward to participating in future implementations of *Girls Decide* and continue advocating for gender empowerment throughout my fellowship!

