

### **Civic Participation Laws & Implementation Policies as the Basis for Effective Participation**

KAS in partnership with the Mobilization Agency for Paralegal Communities in Africa (MAPACA) organized a workshop in Makueni County on 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> July to review the county public participation laws and policies. This informative platform was attended by members of Makueni County Assembly, county oversight forums and civil society members. The forum examined the efforts made in the county to improve public participation and interrogated the problematic issues surrounding those laws and policies. These discussions informed the development of an action plan which has citizens' input for debate and consideration in the ongoing public participation bill development in Makueni County.



**Figure 1A facilitator taking the participants through the sessions topic**

Despite Makueni County being the only county to be commended in the 2018 Auditor General's report on utilization of public funds, it is still faced with challenges in the area of public participation. During the deliberations, it emerged that poor dissemination of information to the citizenry as well as lack of simplified materials discouraged public participation. Participants pointed out that the low involvement of ward officers in leading civic engagement was also an impediment to effective public participation. It emerged that there was need to capacity build county development committees, especially at the sub-ward level for effective public participation.



**Figure 2**Participants during the workshop in Makueni County

The participants were guided through public participation policies and provisions of law from the 2010 Constitution which increased their understanding of the values and principles. While capturing input for action planning, the commitment of Makueni county government in restarting the public participation bill was tested. A six member taskforce was formulated and charged with the responsibility of fast-tracking the bill while on the other hand, an action plan was drafted.