

Women Empowerment for Resilient Rural Areas (WE4R)

Kenya Factsheet

Context

Women in rural areas are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, crises and disasters, as they often experience diminished, and less rights due to discriminatory inheritance practices compared to men within their communities. Their access to resources is more limited, and they are not represented to the same extent in decision-making processes. Intact land resources are at the interface of rural livelihoods and communities' resilience. They enable sustainable agricultural production, are an important source of income, and contribute to food security and sovereignty. The promotion and participation of women in the sustainable management of land resources harbours great potential for reducing their vulnerability and strengthening their ability to cope better with natural disasters, economic dynamics or social conflicts. Empowering women in economically and ecologically sustainable land use not only contributes to gender equality, but also to the implementation of important environmental conventions of the United Nations – in particular the UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification), CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity), and UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). Sustainable land resource management is a crucial connecting dot for achieving the goals of all three conventions. The conventions recognize the importance of equal participation of men and women in their implementation.

Project Duration

2024–2028

Approach

The project promotes gender equality and pursues a gender-responsive, gender-transformative approach, strengthening the “3Rs” - rights, resources, and representation - for women. In the context of sustainable land resource management, this includes strengthening land tenure, land ownership, and land use rights, equal access to means of production, knowledge, technologies, and financing, as well as greater participation in decision-making and planning processes regarding land resource management. The project works at a global level in cooperation with the secretariats of the Rio Conventions and at the national and local levels in cooperation with state structures, civil society, and the private sector.

WE4R Objective

The rights, resources, and representation of women in rural areas are strengthened with regard to the sustainable use of land resources in Kenya.

Focus Areas

- 1. Policy and Evidence:** Coordinate key actors to generate robust, policy-relevant evidence that advances Kenya's national policies and regulations on the 3Rs and sustainable land use, including the protection of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and community land rights. This is achieved through **multi-stakeholder engagements** that bring together government, researchers, civil society, and partners to produce reliable analyses on land degradation, land governance, biodiversity conservation, climate change and adaptation, sustainable land use, and rural resilience, ensuring that evidence directly informs national policy reforms as well as reporting and submissions under the Rio Conventions.



Left: Women farmers in West Pokot benefit from GIZ-supported initiatives that improve access to productive land systems, strengthening livelihoods and food security.

2. Conferencing:

- ③ **Build Technical Alignment:** Host preparatory and consultative workshops to create shared understanding across stakeholders and harmonize methods and indicators for gender disaggregated land governance, land degradation neutrality, climate resilience, and biodiversity monitoring, supported by clear guidance notes and briefs.
- ③ **Strengthen Inclusive Global Participation:** Support more women delegates from both state and non-state institutions to participate in UNFCCC and UNCCD Conference of the Parties (CoPs), improving gender-responsive contributions to global negotiations, reporting, and decision-making.

3. Strengthening Gender Change Agents: These are community resource persons (CRPs) and Gender Change Agents trained as local gender champions who promote the 3Rs. They provide knowledge and guidance and represent the interests of women regarding access to productive resources and involvement in decision-making within their communities. Further, they act at the intermediaries and national level. The gender change agents in Northern and Western Kenya support in bridging the gap between national land laws and community-level practices, ensuring women understand and can claim their land and property rights. These champions voluntarily provide their services related but not limited to:

- ③ **Local Expertise:** They are trusted individuals and community members with solid knowledge of land laws, customary practices, knowledge of indigenous people, and women's land rights.
- ③ **Awareness and Public Education:** They lead community outreaches and household sensitization to promote women's rights to access, own, inherit, and control land resources.
- ③ **Support for Rights Claims:** They guide women and men through local land governance systems to resolve disputes and access necessary documentation.
- ③ **Linkages to Institutions, Service Providers, and Duty Bearers:** Connect communities with formal bodies such as County Land Boards, Community Land Management Committees, legal aid providers, civil society groups, and government agencies.
- ③ **Gender-Responsive Land Governance:** GCAs foster inclusive decision-making and advocate for gender-transformative norms in land ownership and productive resource use.

4. Measures on Gender and Sustainable Use of Land

Resources: WE4R empowers national and local actors with practical skills and competencies to advocate for Women's 3Rs. It strengthens the leadership of women and their allies so they can effectively influence community and institutional decision-making for gender transformation.

- ③ **Male Allyship:** Men are engaged as supportive partners who challenge harmful norms that reinforce patriarchy and actively champion gender equity in their communities.
- ③ **Community Paralegalism:** A grassroots approach that empowers local communities with legal knowledge and advocacy skills for socio-economic empowerment. This is aimed at promoting women's land rights and access to related resources while positively representing their interests in decision-making bodies
- ③ **Haki Ardhi Tool:** A user-friendly digital tool for reporting land-related violations by rural communities. This results in eased burden in access to justice and actioning through a pluralistic legal avenue such as AJS/ADR, rescue, formal justice system, tribunals and mediation.
- ③ **Community-led Land Lease Guidelines:** Gender-responsive guidelines help ensure women are not disadvantaged and can benefit equally from land-based opportunities, including access to land resources (secure land tenure that enhances sustainable land use).
- ③ **Engagement in Multistakeholder Platforms:** Women and allies participate in diverse platforms where they can voice their priorities and shape policies that affect their livelihoods.
- ③ **Media Engagement:** Utilization of TV series, radio talk shows, edutainment, and policy briefs through media to raise public awareness on their rights in order to actualize them, challenge stereotypes, and amplify women's leadership and land rights concerns.

Implementing partners

Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD), African Women in Agriculture, Research and Development (AWARD), Think Tank for Sustainability (TMG), Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM), AMKA Africa Justice Initiative, CARE Kenya, Shibuye Community Health Workers Organization, Pamoja for Transformation Trust, and Turkana Pastoralists Development Organization (TUPADO).

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Women Empowerment For Resilient Rural Areas (WE4R)
P. O. Box 41607-00100
Nairobi, Kenya
96 Riverside, Segen Plaza, 3rd floor
Email: sophia.baumert@giz.de
www.giz.de

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Dr. Sophia Baumert and Stephanie Mate

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