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# Gender Assessment

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**FP113: Towards ending drought emergencies:  
Ecosystem based Adaptation in Kenya's arid and  
semi-arid rangelands (TWENDE)**

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## 15 Gender issues in response to the impact of climate change on drylands

Climate change mitigation measures in the project area could include reforestation, and promotion/ development of alternative clean energy sources, while adaptation strategies include promotion of drought-resistant and fast maturing crops, agro-pastoralism, construction of water pans, institutionalization of traditional natural resource management structures (e.g. grazing councils), community education/awareness and diversification of livelihood systems. Additional measures include the improvement of livestock breeds, restocking, destocking and establishing an Early Warning System.

- **Encourage conservation through income generation**-Associating credit facilities with natural resource management efforts is one of the best ways of encouraging rural women and men to take an interest in environmentally sound activities.
- **Involve local women and men**- Local land use management arrangements that increase women's and men's authority over resources should be promoted, indigenous knowledge valued and special attention to local priorities given. This demonstrates how local women and men can be empowered and supported to assume greater local control over resources
- **Awareness raising and education**- This should be aimed at attitudinal change in bringing about change. For instance, the Burkina Faso, Niger and Senegal field experience promoted improved cooking stove designs as a way of combating deforestation. Women rejected some of the new stoves because they did not take specific technical food preparation factors into account, while other models were widely adopted and resulted in dramatic savings in wood biomass.
- **Strengthen local institutions**- Credit facilities through traditional women's mutual assistance groups are successful in increasing household food security. However, local institutions are often not yet strong enough to continue the credit schemes, resulting in declining repayment rates and little new activity.
- **Promote sustainability**- It is essential to promote both empowerment and the cultural traits that lead to sustainability. However, focusing on the traditional roles in order to improve the sustainability of drylands carries the built-in danger of reinforcing gender gaps.
- Improve women's and men's access to and control over productive resources, such as land, agricultural support services, access to education, markets, etc. Also promoting a better access to resources can contribute to women's and men's empowerment.

# 16 General Findings

## Findings

The focus and scope of the gender analysis is clustered on 3-4 large scale drought reserves that cut across the thirteen county boundaries creating four (4) priority landscape sites for coordinated gender analysis namely: Moyale-Wajir North-Banisa Hills, Sabarwawa, Mid Tana river and Chyullu Hills.

### **Below is a summary of general findings:**

1. Gender discrimination in drylands is a result of an unequal social, cultural and economic structure and limited political and organizational influence, which translate into marginalisation, poverty, food insecurity and limited access to resources. In general, men are responsible for decision-making and the planning of farming activities, while women have little authority and have to seek their husbands' permission before they commit family resources or make decisions. Nonetheless, women in dryland areas play a key role in natural resource management and achieving food security. They often grow, process, manage and market food and other natural resources. They are generally responsible for small livestock, vegetable gardens and collecting fuel, fodder and water, as well as carrying out their traditional reproductive roles.
2. In the project areas mentioned above it was generally found out that women's traditional roles are particularly crucial in drylands in terms of natural resource management and food security. Men were found to be more responsible for decision-making and planning of farming activities and livestock management but in other areas, they increasingly leave the degraded areas to look for jobs in urban areas, leaving women to assume new roles and responsibilities on the farm and rangelands. Women's access to and control over natural resources (such as land) and agricultural support services (including credit, extension services, etc.) is often restricted.
3. Through gender analysis it was observed that women's limited access to agricultural resources and services is caused by a series of social, economic and cultural factors that force rural women into a subordinate role and hamper their productivity. As well as limiting their participation in decision-making processes and development initiatives. It was also clear that customary practices and laws have limited women's rights to land despite legislation that guarantees those rights. Particularly pressing is the issue of insecure land tenure that reduces women's and youth incentives to have no permanent rights to the land. Without secure land rights, women and youth have little or no access to credit, rural organizations and other agricultural inputs and services.
4. Field experiences suggest that an interesting social and economic transition is under way in drylands of Kenya. An increasing number of households in these drylands are relying less on agricultural activities for income and more on off-farm employment (as well as on remittances from migrant labour). This has enabled households to meet their food security needs in an environment of declining land productivity and, at the same time, it reduces the pressure on drylands natural resources.
5. Smallholders, particularly women, often face difficulties in obtaining credit. This is a direct consequence of their lacking ownership to land and to their low involvement in development projects and membership in rural organizations. It is crucial for this project to promote income-generating activities for women as a vital source of household food security. These projects provide women with management and organizational skills and empower them through increased revenues and self-esteem.
6. While men are mostly represented in traditional farmers' organizations and are the recipients of most extension initiatives, this analysis found that establishing and supporting women's groups helps women to improve their own livelihoods. Through

these groups, women are able to deal with their problems, voice their concerns and increase their confidence. These groups help women to tackle the extreme conditions that derive from drylands degradation, including reforestation and irrigation activities and overcoming barriers to income-generating activities.

7. By recognition of the value of indigenous knowledge, as well as women's and men's roles as innovators regarding dryland conservation and farming techniques, then the project should ensure and promote the participation of women and men (as innovators and end users) in order to improve tools and techniques aimed at combating desertification. Both women and men should be viewed as the agents and beneficiaries of change. Involving rural communities, especially the "voiceless", in resource management and in decisions regarding environmentally sound practices and techniques is a powerful way to mitigate the conditions and the impact of land degradation.
8. The analysis observed that removal of gender-related barriers for greater access to resources was critical. Through a gender perspective eight (8) key issues related to access to, and control of resources were identified namely: land tenure, credit, education, time, information, awareness raising, decision making, support services and markets. The report has identified insecure lands tenure as a key constraint for women and youth to make long-term investments in land rehabilitation, conservation and maintain soil quality because they have no long-term or permanent rights to the land.
9. Women usually have even less access to land (and control) than men. Across the 4 project landscapes it was noted that customary practices and laws that limit women's right to land are deeply entrenched and most of the time subjugate land legislation that guarantees women rights to land. Providing credit through traditional mutual assistance groups, is one of the best ways of encouraging rural women and men to take an interest in dryland management across the counties.
10. Smallholders, particularly women, often face difficulties in obtaining credit due to lack of collateral. There is a need for the project to develop informal sector enterprises and alternative livelihood possibilities making credit available to small farmers, especially to women and youth. It was also noted that womens' access to agricultural support services has been hampered despite their multiple roles in dryland management. Women's groups have if supported well, are capable of tackling extreme livelihood conditions deriving from dryland degradation, including through reforestation and irrigation activities. Awareness raising and education concerning desertification can lead to changes in attitudes and longer term social change.
11. It was observed that women in the targeted drylands counties face the difficulty of turning surplus products into cash income because of their lack of transport and access to markets. Women face particular constraints as marketing infrastructure and organizations are rarely geared towards small-scale production or to crops grown by women farmers. Project activities that provide women with management and organizational skills would help them to participate in decision making processes and project activities.
12. Women living in drylands are particularly concerned as they usually have to walk longer distances to collect water and fuel wood and take on more farming responsibilities in the absence of men. It is thus important for the project to consider gender strategies and activities that free-up women from heavy workloads, such as the search for water and fuel wood. This is crucial if they are to spend more time on their gardens, income generating activities or dryland conservation agriculture.

## 17 Specific findings in line with Gender Analysis Framework

1. Men control access to most productive assets in Kenya (World Bank 2003). Most dryland communities in Kenya share a patriarchal culture in which men own the key productive assets such as land, livestock and medium to large businesses. A woman, for example, may milk the family cow and sell the milk products, but she could not sell the cow itself because it is “owned” by her husband. For dryland conservation, this means that activities which include the use of productive resources like land or livestock should include men and women in decision-making. Secondly, any proposed land-use change relating to dryland conservation should include both local men and women as key stakeholders.
2. Access to credit is a key constraint in improving women’s economic productivity across the selected counties. Hence it is important that the project focuses on improving women’s access to credit.
3. Women contribute up to 80% of the food production labor in drylands yet benefit from only 7% of the agricultural extension services. Most extension officers are men (85% in some provinces), and cultural sensitivities may prohibit men extension agents from talking to women farmers in group trainings and community dialogue meetings. For it is proposed that the project targets improving women’s access to agricultural inputs.
4. The project can provide support and partner with Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Development’s across key counties still practicing FGM. Program activities that eliminate female genital cutting may be an option that would improve the health of girls locally.
5. Illiteracy varies greatly among counties and is highest in the northern counties. There is a continuing belief among some men that it is a waste of time to educate girls because they will join someone else’s family when they marry and do not need to read to do their work. This is a backward belief that is hindering girls and women from not getting education. The project should assume a high degree of illiteracy in most areas of Kenya and deliberately design a strong communication strategy that will focus on verbal communications and visual media more than written media across select counties.
6. Any conservation activity that might result in girls having to go farther to fetch water or firewood or that would increase the workload of women and girls in a household may negatively impact on the schooling of girls. For this project working with women in polygynous unions may require first working with the husbands to gain agreement on any proposed activities. The project should target men as “key change agents”.
7. There is a primary objection across by men to contraceptives especially northern frontier counties. Addressing this concern with outreach and education should be part of the project activity that include improving access to contraceptives and general reproductive health for women and youth in dryland counties. Secondly, the inclusion of a focus on nutrition education is important in improving pastoral women’s health and indeed that of the wider family.
8. Rampant cattle rustling and increased insecurity from raiding other communities for livestock due to dowry needs and banditry often hinders the participation of women in the community and the local economy because of fear of violence. This limits them close to home. Dryland initiatives that include protection for wildlife and people may be well received by local women. Secondly through dryland conservation initiatives, women are able participate in meetings and trainings.
9. For pastoralists, especially girls, a combination of high-quality and locally relevant broadcast programmes, face-to-face teaching would be ideal avenues for raising awareness and challenging stereotypes on the many gender issues affecting dryland communities.

10. Social protection schemes show great promise in supporting vulnerable groups in dryland areas and particularly women. This can be implemented by improving women's access to risk management and insurance products.
11. Promoting income generation for pastoralist women can increase their socio-economic position in the household. For example, by linking women to markets for livestock-related products can promote social and economic empowerment, and can be culturally acceptable among most dryland communities. More investment is also needed to improve women's participation in alternative livelihoods, to ensure that their rights and interests are recognized
12. Increased collaboration and partnership with likeminded CSOs, academic institutions and the media working on dryland issues can help increase awareness of gender, pastoralist, and environmental sustainability issues in the drylands. This awareness raising should seek to counter the negative stereotypes of dryland areas to culturally revalue them and women's knowledge and equal rights in particular. In addition, CSOs could support gender justice involving whole communities, men, and local leaders, to challenge discriminatory social norms and harmful practices.
13. Women have simultaneous and competing demands for productive (market) and reproductive (household) labor time. Time poverty and income poverty often reinforce each other. For gender and conservation, this means any activity that adds to a women's time burden may negatively impact other areas of her life. Avoiding such activities, reducing them to a minimum, or mitigating them with offsets should be the hierarchy of the project.
14. It is critical for proposed activities to understand and integrate season calendars and daily labour time schedules in project design, planning and implementation of local activities that reduce the "time poverty" of women. Secondly, time poverty among female-headed households is particularly acute. Targeting female-headed households in the project can help ensure project benefits are distributed to both poor and better off households. Providing offsets greater than the opportunity costs of a new activity is critical for female-headed households. In other words, the women have to be clearly better off in time or money by participating in a new activity than they would have been without the activity.
15. Sensitivity to the traditional divisions of labor may help to design the project better to be more socially acceptable. It is women and girls who collect the drinking water in most of Kenya, and as the time needed to fetch water increases, school attendance for girls may drop (Nankhuni & Findeis 2004, Ndiritu & Nyangan 2010). Improving drinking water quality and quantity may have direct benefits to women and girls in the project.
16. The new constitution in August 2010 guarantees equal rights regardless of gender, and for the first time, customary laws are no longer exempt from constitutional provisions against discrimination. The project should build on Kenya's legal framework for gender. This would help to reduce gender inequities in the project area.
17. Increasing cash income for women is likely to have larger benefits for local human well-being than doing the same for men. Secondly, the government has encouraged the formation of local women's groups. Partnering with a women-orientated groups may help ensure women benefit at least as much as men from a conservation initiative.

# 18 Project Specific Recommendations

## 18.1 Specific Recommendations

- 1) Promote the use of efficient technologies targeting women to increase agricultural production, particularly with improved crop varieties and drought-resistant inputs for crops and livestock.
- 2) Enhance practices and technologies for animal production and health, including vaccination and animal health services targeting women and men.
- 3) Promote capacity-building activities on proper livestock breeding, as well as agronomic practices and agribusiness while using men as key change agents.
- 4) Strengthen surveillance mechanisms at county and ward levels to control pests and diseases. Hence there is a need to increase investments and resources for implementing sustainable disease control programmes and strategies targeting women and men in conjunction with the county governments.
- 5) In coordination with counties, enforce existing laws governing disease control and improve the coverage of vaccination programmes and training of community animal health workers (CAHWs) targeting both men and women.
- 6) Support targeted Government and community-based organizations in providing animal health and production services (e.g. veterinary associations, government veterinary extension services and cooperatives) through capacity development of women, CSOs and self-help groups (SHGs).
- 7) Invest and pilot improved techniques and practices for reducing storage and post-harvest losses with specific tailored trainings geared towards women.
- 8) Invest in improved efficiency of processing and preservation of food products by women. These should be particularly related to the marketing of livestock products, and support for the development and rehabilitation of livestock infrastructure, such as markets and slaughterhouses.
- 9) Support women in income-generating activities to enhance the diversification of income sources and livelihoods with both on-farm and off-farm productive activities and services. This is intended to reduce the impact of negative shocks on households by diversifying the risk exposure and mitigating the negative coping strategies employed by less resilient households.
- 10) Expand access to financial support services targeting women in rural households to connect small-scale producers with a variety of savings, loan and grant schemes to strengthen and diversify their livelihood base and income potential. This should promote small business development by promoting small business development matching grants, with a focus on youth and women.
- 11) Enhance and design programmes that target gender-based issues and youth to access to efficient financial products and services, such as access to credit and market information.
- 12) Enhance environmental sustainability, and improve natural resource management and equitable access to resources through adoption of women centered approaches to negotiate and secure access to land, title deeds and contracts.
- 13) Enhance participation of women and men in negotiated peace talks as pre-requisites for improving the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources (such as land, pasture, water, trees, etc.) so as to overcome natural resource-based conflicts.
- 14) Enhance participation of women and men in rangeland rehabilitation and management while promoting fodder production to improve women access to production land, water and pasture for livestock, and can decrease natural resource-based conflicts and insecurity.
- 15) Facilitate and support community-based management of rangeland and rehabilitation through women groups, women organisations and the improvement of rangelands through cash-for-work programmes that include women participating.