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# Gender Transformative Approaches for Land Restoration

Lessons Learnt from a Multi-stakeholder  
Co-design Process in Makueni County, Kenya

# Contents

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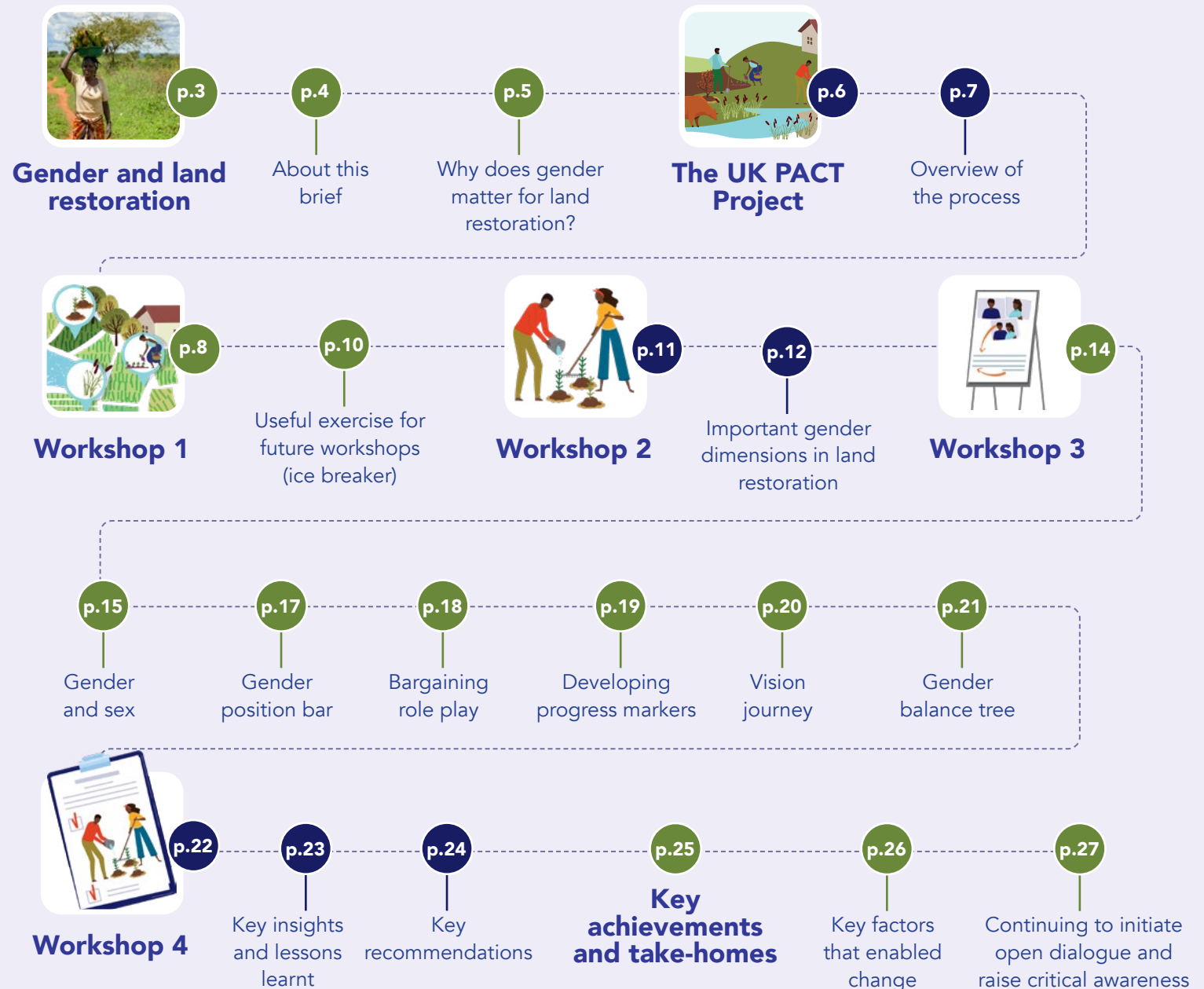
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# Gender and land restoration

Around the world, billions of people depend on tree-based landscapes for their livelihoods and well-being. However, not all people have equal power to decide how trees and land are managed or how resources are used and shared. Despite the Kenyan national constitution granting men and women equal rights to inherit and own land, women's land rights and ownership remain restricted by customary norms, where men generally inherit land and many women only gain rights and access to land through their husbands and male family members. Consequently, men often exercise greater control over how land is used and managed, particularly activities involving more permanent, long-term investments such as tree planting and management. This lack of land ownership (identified in all 47 county engagements as one of the barriers to land restoration<sup>1</sup>) can limit women's livelihood opportunities and ability to contribute to, influence and benefit from land restoration activities.

Land restoration initiatives that are gender blind and fail to involve both men and women risk exacerbating existing gender inequalities, further undermining the voice and agency of women and girls, as well as increasing their labour burden. At the same time, there is growing evidence that greater gender equality can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of restoration efforts. Through supporting efforts to

enhance the realisation of women's rights, including their right to land, land restoration initiatives could serve as a platform for wider social change and scaling. One such way is through Gender Transformative Approaches for land restoration. Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA) seek to actively interrogate, challenge and transform the cultural attitudes and social norms that lead to gender inequality.<sup>2</sup>

*Where "business-as-usual", accommodative gender approaches try to work around barriers, and are often focused solely on women, gender transformative approaches have broken new ground by transforming structural barriers and constraining gender norms, meaning the unwritten rules about who can do what kind of work, control what types of assets and make what level of decisions.<sup>3</sup>*

1 Muthuri C, Odhiambo E, Akombo R, Kamau PM, Wanyora V, Mugi P, Wanjira EO, Muga M, Njoki C, Bourne M. 2022. A trends analysis on forest and landscape restoration in Kenya. Nairobi, Kenya: World Agroforestry

2 Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2022. Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/joint-programme-gender-transformative-approaches/overview/gender-transformative-approaches/en>.

3 CGIAR Gender Platform, N.D. Gender Transformative Approaches to overcome constraining gender norms. Available at: <https://gender.cgiar.org/tools-methods-manuals/gender-transformative-approaches-overcome-constraining-gender-norms>.

“  
*When one looks at the rural space, women and girls tend to bear inordinate burden in terms of agriculture, raising livelihood, and taking care of the family. Given the role they play and their reliance on natural resources, it is women that are most vulnerable to the impacts of degradation. Restoring degraded landscapes is therefore critical to easing the pressure they face and promoting effectiveness of land restoration.*”

– Prof. Kivutha Kibawana, Governor of Makueni County

## About this brief

As part of the UK PACT funded project, “Promoting nature-based solutions for land restoration while strengthening national monitoring technical working group in Kenya”, a series of multi-stakeholder workshops were held to co-design and scale locally appropriate and gender-responsive options for land restoration in Makueni County, Kenya.

This guide focuses on the gender transformative approach taken by the UK PACT project, providing an overview of the process, recommendations on scaling this approach, and lessons learned from the workshops and training events. It is aimed at restoration practitioners and initiatives invested in gender transformation, to assist in enhancing knowledge and skills on gender transformative approaches to land restoration.

The hope is that the lessons learnt from this project can be used to further strengthen capacity in the use of gender transformative approaches, to promote inclusive community dialogues, and through this, improve the ownership, success and sustainability of land restoration.



## Why does gender matter for land restoration?

Men and women often have different roles, responsibilities, and access to and control of resources. The costs and benefits of land restoration are therefore likely to differ for men and women. Failing to consider gender in land restoration can limit the ownership and consequently uptake of restoration practices, and risks worsening gender inequality. Efforts to restore degraded lands are often knowledge, time and labour intensive, and risk increasing women's already overloaded workloads.

Addressing these challenges and disparities through open dialogue is essential for sustainable scaling land restoration and ensuring gender equitable outcomes. The activities outlined in this guide can be used to help communities realise the role that gender plays in their lives and discuss what changes could be made to support restoration efforts and move toward a more equal society.

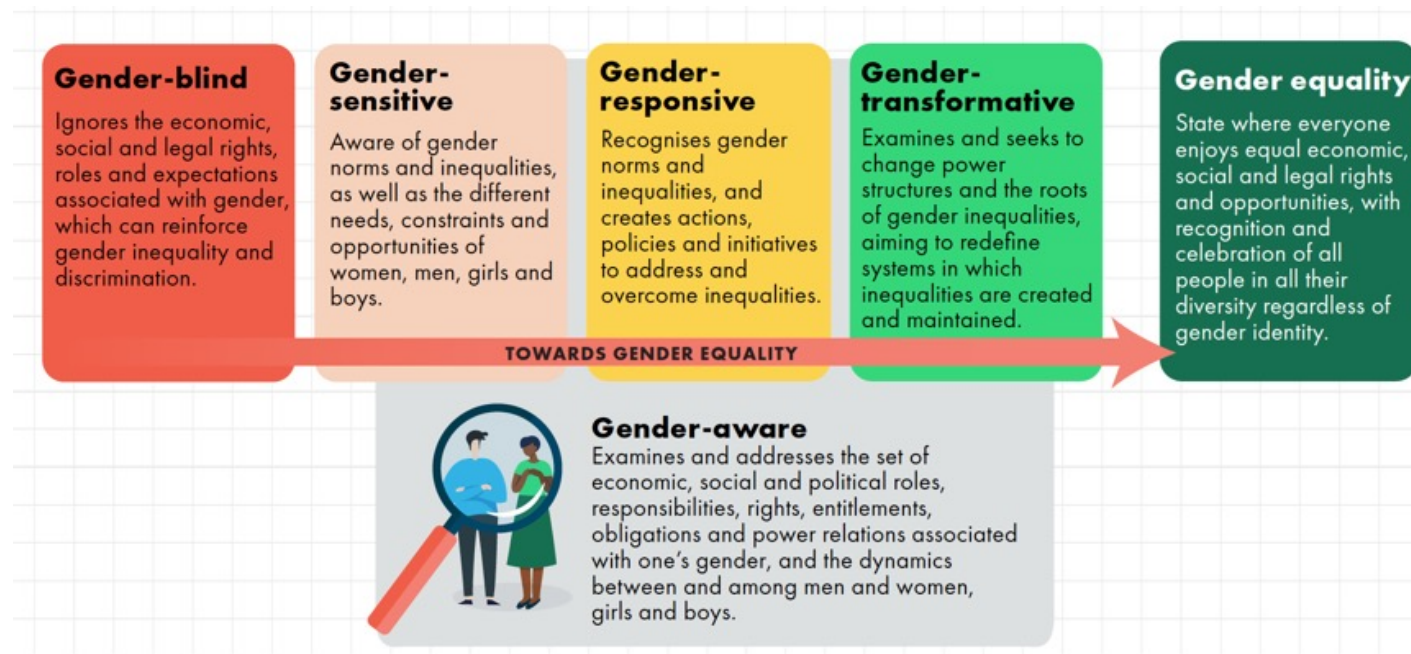


Figure 1: The continuum from gender blindness towards gender equality. (CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry. 2021)

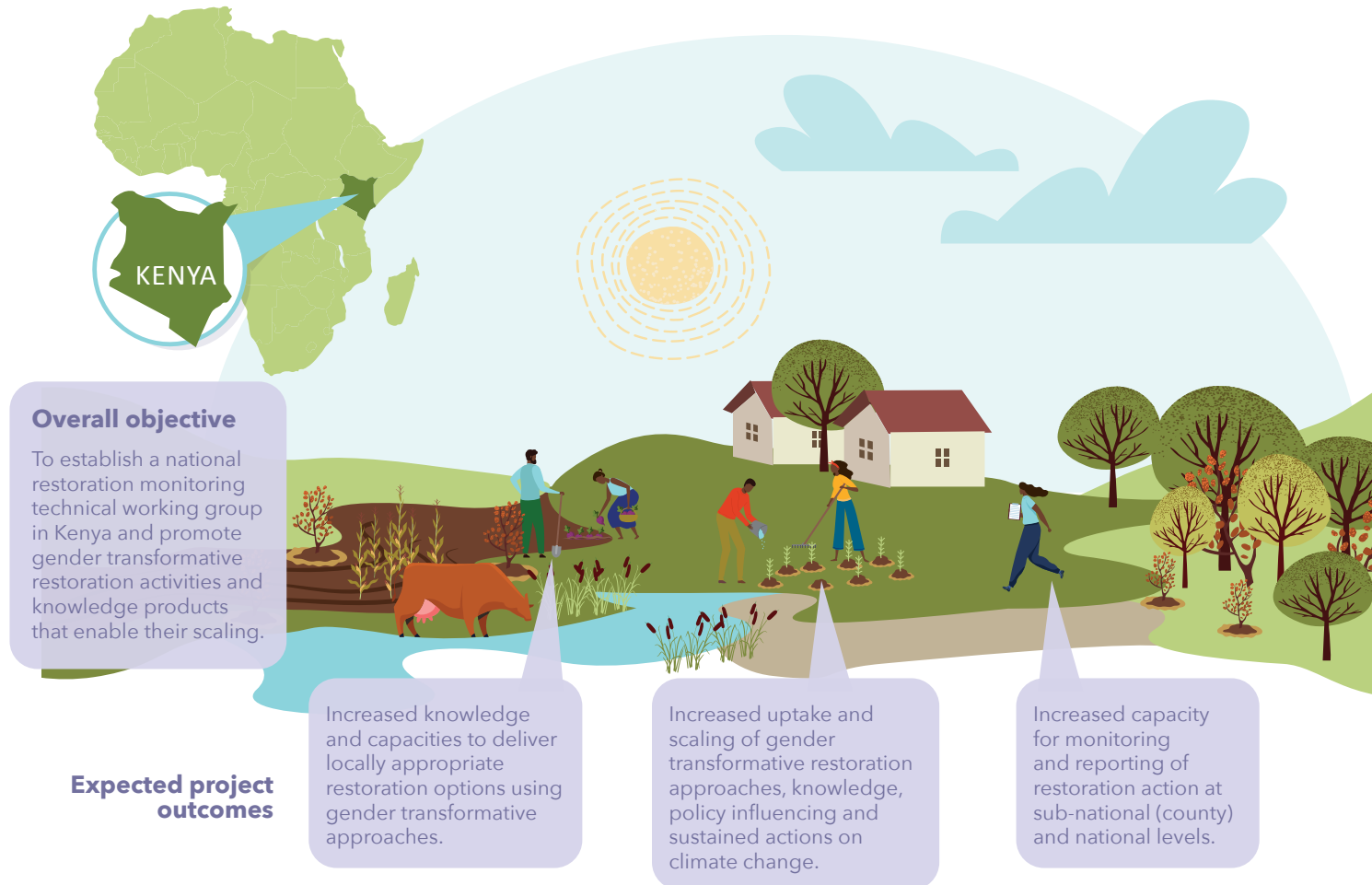


Figure 2: Word cloud generated from participants' responses to the question: "Why is gender and social inclusion important for land restoration?", which was asked during the two-day Gender and Land Restoration Workshops held in February 2022.

# The UK PACT Project

Over 36% of Kenya's population lives below the national poverty line. Only 20% of the country's land is classified as suitable for agriculture, yet 75% of the population depends on it. Escalating land degradation, exacerbated by climate change, increasing frequency and severity of droughts, flooding, locust invasions and low investment in sustainable and resilient agriculture negatively impact the environment and rural livelihoods.

In an attempt to improve the current situation, the UK PACT funded project "Promoting nature-based solutions for land restoration while strengthening the national monitoring technical working group in Kenya" seeks to address land degradation, climate change, biodiversity loss, food insecurity and poverty through nature-based solutions including planting the right trees in the right place for the right purpose, farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR), soil and water conservation, agroecology and other restoration practices. It also aimed to establish a national joint restoration monitoring technical working group to enable a credible monitoring and reporting system on AFR100.



## Overview of the process

Building on recently published reports that identify restoration potential in Makueni<sup>4</sup> and the need for gender-transformative approaches to scaling restoration efforts<sup>5</sup>, the project sought to **identify and match a diversity of restoration practices to the local farming context, paying attention to how intra household gender dynamics condition the suitability of options and generate constraints and opportunities for scaling.**

The gender transformative and option by context approaches promoted by the project were chosen to ensure that gender and social inclusion priorities will be recognized and catered for in future restoration efforts, and create lessons for sustainability and

wider scaling. This directly contributes to the UK PACT expected impact of generating a just transition where women and vulnerable smallholder farmers have a real chance to participate and benefit from restoration and sustainable development.

*“Challenging disempowering gender norms is central to inclusive restoration. Gender-transformative workshops are a critical first step”.*<sup>6</sup>

The series of workshops that were held throughout the duration of the project aimed not only to **raise awareness of the importance of gender and social inclusion in restoration**, but also to

**strengthen people’s capacity** in the use of gender-transformative approaches. These are activities designed to challenge the disempowering attitudes, perceptions and cultural norms that underlie gender inequalities.

4 Makueni County Government (2019). Forest and Landscape Restoration Opportunities Assessment for Makueni County. MCG (Kenya), x + 50p

5 Crossland, M., Paez Valencia, A.M., Pagella, T., Magaju, C., Kiura, E., Winowiecki, L. and Sinclair, F. (2021). Onto the Farm, into the Home: How Intra-household Gender Dynamics Shape Land Restoration in Eastern Kenya. *Ecological Restoration*, 39: 90- 107.

6 Wavinya, A. 2022. Transforming gender norms for land restoration in Kenya. Available at: <https://worldagroforestry.org/blog/2022/03/08/transforming-gender-norms-land-restoration-kenya>.

**Over 300 participants**, both men (48%) and women (52%), from the county government, non-governmental organizations and representatives from various community-based organizations and farmers’ groups.



-----• **Together, the stakeholders worked through a variety of training activities and reflective sessions.**





# Workshop 1: Co-designing context-appropriate and gender responsive land restoration options



October 27, 2021



Wote, Makueni County, Kenya



## Workshop objectives

- Introduce the Options by Context approach to land restoration;
- Identify promising restoration options and the contextual factors conditioning their suitability for different user groups;
- Foster collective reflection on how the social dimensions of land restoration can generate constraints and opportunities for scaling up restoration efforts.

The first stakeholder workshop was a one-day event held in Wote, Makueni County to **introduce the ‘options by context’ (OxC) approach to land restoration.**<sup>7</sup> “It brought together 29 people from a diverse group of stakeholders from the County Government of Makueni, including the Kenya Forest Service (KFS), the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI), and the African Sand Dam Foundation (ASDF), to local agricultural officers, farmers and youth groups, among others. The goal was to **share knowledge and co-design inclusive and context-appropriate land restoration options for the county.**

The Options by Context (OxC) approach responds to the need to match and tailor solutions to local conditions. The approach involves iterative cycles of assessing promising options, interrogating where and for whom they are likely to work best, and identifying and filling the gaps in our understanding through co-learning and participatory processes.

Find out more:  
<https://apps.worldagroforestry.org/downloads/Publications/PDFS/TN22019.pdf>



In her opening remarks, Catherine Muthuri, the project lead and CIFOR-ICRAF’s regional convener for East Africa and country director for Kenya, emphasised the importance of matching land restoration options to local circumstances for achieving impact at scale and improving people’s livelihoods. She further highlighted the crucial role of rural women and youth as catalysts of change in the county.

*“Restoration can only work if we work closely with local communities to better understand the social, economic and environmental contexts, as well as gender dimensions, when planning and implementing sustainable land restoration interventions. The ongoing restoration work in Makueni County serves as a model for learning and upscaling across the country.”<sup>8</sup>*

– Catherine Muthuri, Project Lead

This diversity of the stakeholder groups present was key to the success of the workshop, which identified:

- On-going and promising land restoration activities in the county;
- Key biophysical, social and economic contextual factors conditioning the suitability of land restoration options; and
- Opportunities and constraints to scaling-up restoration.

<sup>7</sup> Sinclair F, Coe R. 2019. The options by context approach: a paradigm shift in agronomy. *Experimental Agriculture* 55:1–13

<sup>8</sup> Wavinya, A. 2022. Co-designing inclusive and locally appropriate land restoration options. Available at: <https://www.worldagroforestry.org/blog/2022/03/01/co-designing-inclusive-and-locally-appropriate-land-restoration-options>



Among the important **contextual factors that were identified in the workshop**, participants highlighted **gender and age** as cross-cutting in nature because they influence a person's access to, and control over, the resources needed for restoration, such as land, labour and capital.

*“As men migrate to work in towns and cities, women are increasingly taking on the primary household role and engaging in restoration initiatives. Yet, they continue to lack decision-making power and control over the productive assets required to act. We need approaches that engage the wider household in restoration activities and decision-making.”*

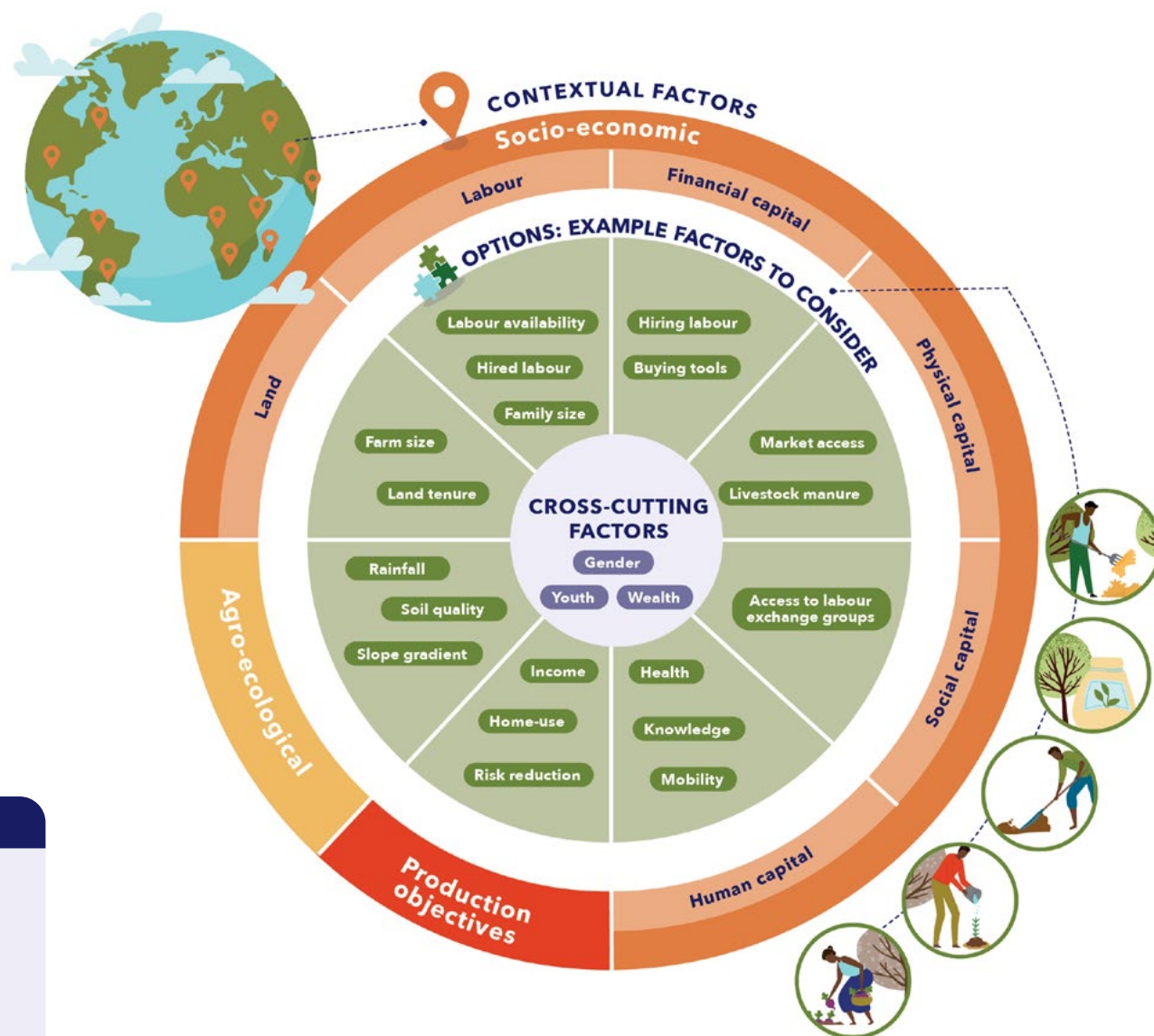
– Mary Crossland, Livelihood Scientist (CIFOR-ICRAF)

The workshop was the first of many that sought to strengthen capacity in the use of gender-responsive approaches for restoration and actively pave the way for transformative changes in gender relations, which underpin the success, sustainability and equity of restoration outcomes.



### Key workshop achievements

- ✓ Increased understanding and capacity for OxC approaches to land restoration amongst participants;
- ✓ Increased awareness of the importance of inclusivity and cross-cutting nature of social factors such as gender and age;
- ✓ Participants identified some of the key opportunities for integrating OxC and inclusive approaches into ongoing restoration activities.



**Figure 3:** Key interactions of options and context in the OxC approach, with example factors (identified during a multi-stakeholder workshop held in Makueni County, Kenya).

## Useful exercise for future workshops: Ice breaker

This ice breaker exercise gets the participants thinking about why gender and social inclusion are important for land restoration efforts. It is also a useful tool for gauging the general perception and understanding of the topic.

- 1 Separate workshop participants into tables (5-8 people to a table depending on size of workshop)
- 2 At each table, ask participants to discuss and write down (on flipchart paper) their responses to the following question:  
Why does gender and social inclusion matter for land restoration?
- 3 After 5-10 minutes, each group should delegate one representative to share some of the responses from the exercise.



Photo: ICRAF/Caroline Njoki

Below are some responses from the groups at the Gender and Land Restoration Workshops held in Makueni County.:

- It **reduces conflict** between husband and wife, hence enhancing peace and cohesion in the family and community.
- It **promotes fairness** ensuring no one is left behind.
- **Youth involvement** in land restoration activities ensures early and continued land use.
- It can lead to **increased food productivity and yields**, resulting in improved livelihoods.
- **Efforts are more likely to be sustained** if both men and women are involved.
- It can **reduce land use disputes** enhancing good/better land management.
- **Encourages ownership** regardless of gender and age and a sense of belonging – everyone feels involved.
- **Diminishes negative traditional cultures/practices.**



## Workshop 2: Stengthening capacity in Gender Transformative Approaches



15-16 February 2022, 22-23 February 2022



Tawa (Mbooni East) and Kibwezi Town (Kibwezi East), Makueni County, Kenya



### Workshop objectives

- Raise awareness of the importance of gender in land restoration efforts and reflect on how gender roles and norms can generate constraints and opportunities;
- Provide training in tools and activities that foster collaboration, joint decision-making, and gender equitable benefit sharing from land restoration efforts;
- Identify opportunities for adapting and using these tools and activities in ongoing and future land restoration efforts and for conducting local training events.

**In addition to locally relevant restoration practices, ICRAF research highlights a need for intrahousehold approaches to restoration efforts that engage the wider household in decision-making and implementation.**<sup>9</sup> Amid growing male outmigration, women are increasingly assuming primary farmer roles and engaging in restoration initiatives.<sup>10</sup> Yet, they continue to lack decision-making power and control over productive assets and critical assets required to act, such as land, labour and capital. Restoration initiatives that engage whole households and seek to shift inequitable gender relations where women have increased voice in decisions, are likely to result in greater uptake and more equitable outcomes.

*“Everyone in a household has their unique strengths, therefore, both men and women should work together for restoration to bear maximum results”*

– Mary Mbenge, Chief Officer of Environment and Climate Change, Makueni County

Building on the lessons learnt from the first workshop, two gender and land restoration training workshops were held. These workshops focused on co-developing gender transformative approaches for land restoration. The workshops brought together 81 participants, both male and female, from the County Government of Makueni, Kenya Forest Service (KFS), Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI), World Resources Institute (WRI), representatives from community and farmers groups and ward-level committees on climate change.

The workshops aimed not only to raise awareness of the importance of gender and social inclusion in restoration but also to strengthen people’s capacity in the use of gender-transformative approaches.

The participants were introduced to an approach named community dialogues on gender and land restoration. These dialogues involve a series of group activities adapted from existing toolkits and are designed to encourage critical reflection and awareness of how gender roles and relations impact households’ capacities to engage in land restoration.

9 Crossland, M., Paez Valencia, A.M., Pagella, T., Magaju, C., Kiura, E., Winowiecki, L. and Sinclair, F. (2021). Onto the Farm, into the Home: How Intrahousehold Gender Dynamics Shape Land Restoration in Eastern Kenya. *Ecological Restoration*, 39: 90- 107.

10 Crossland, M., Paez Valencia, A.M., Pagella, T., Mausch, K., Dilley, L., Harris, D. and Winowiecki, L. (2021). Women’s Changing Aspirations Amid Male Outmigration. *Insights from Rural Kenya*, 33, 910-932. *The European Journal of Development Research*.

The first activity aimed to **explore socially constructed gender roles and stimulate discussion on how gender norms have changed in the past and can change in the future**.<sup>11,12</sup> Participants were asked to think of the first words that come to mind when they hear the words ‘woman’ and ‘man’ and to differentiate between words that relate only to men or women and those which can apply to both. For example, breastfeeding is a sex-oriented task performed by only women while cooking can be carried out by both men and women despite being commonly associated with the word ‘woman’.

The remaining activities focused on **creative ways of identifying imbalances in workloads and decision-making power within households** and reflecting on how such inequalities present potential challenges for land restoration and the changes that men and women would like to see. You can read more about these activities from pg. 14.



Participants identifying imbalances in workloads and decision-making power within households. Photo: ICRAF/Ann Wavinya

11 Leder S, Das D, Reckers A, Karki E. 2017. Participatory gender training for community groups: a manual for critical discussions on gender norms, roles and relations. Colombo, Sri Lanka: International Water Management Institute; Rome, Italy: CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems.

12 Jost C, Ferdous N, Spicer TD. 2014. Gender and inclusion toolbox: participatory research in climate change and agriculture. Copenhagen, Denmark: CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security; Atlanta GA, USA: CARE International; Nairobi, Kenya: World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF).

## Important gender dimensions in land restoration

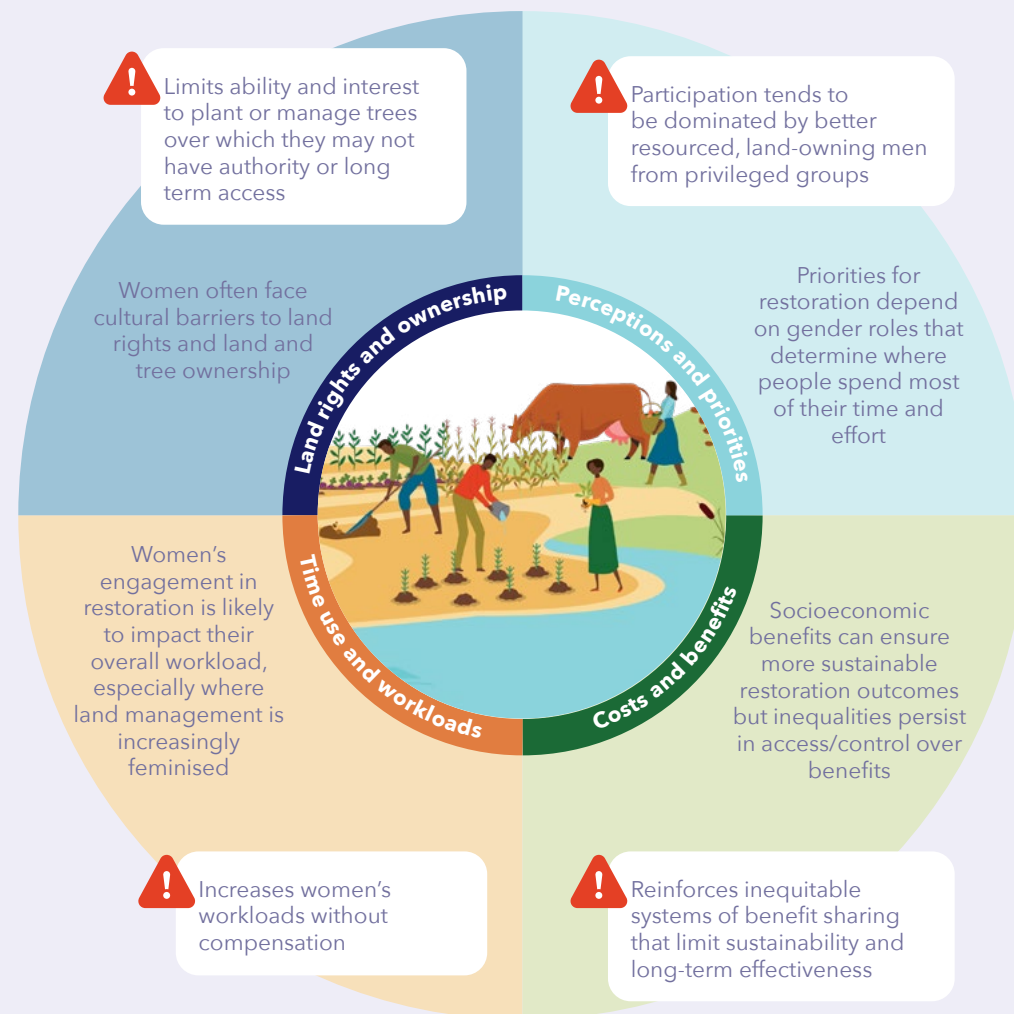


Figure 4: Important gender dimensions for land restoration. (For more information, visit <https://www.foreststreesagroforestry.org/gender-and-inclusion-in-forest-landscape-restoration/>)

One activity that proved to be popular with participants was the **bargaining role-play**.<sup>13</sup> Designed to give men and women a chance to see what it is like to negotiate as the other gender in a farming or household situation, participants performed short skits where the men dressed up as the female characters and vice versa.

*"I felt very powerful"*

– Female workshop participant, on her experience as the male head of the household in a play

*"It was painful that my husband didn't allow me to sell my cow, yet I bought the cow with money from my small vegetable business!"*

– Male workshop participant, on his experience as a wife in a play



Photo: ICRAF/Alex Maina and Ann Wavinya

The activities triggered positive discussions on priority gender issues and desired changes. Several themes emerged, including the importance of joint ownership of land and joint decision-making. When people have a sense of ownership and agency over land restoration it increases the chance that they will support activities and ensure success and sustainability.

Gender power imbalances contribute heavily to the outcome of restoration. It is therefore crucial that restoration projects not only look to address the interests and needs of all those who will be affected by restoration initiatives but actively seek to address the underlying causes of inequities.

Over the course of the two-day workshops, it was clear that several male participants had softened their stance on men having the final say over farm decisions in favour of more collaborative decision-making.

On the final day of the workshops, participants formed seven support groups and made plans to hold their own one-day training events on the activities they found most fruitful.



## Key workshop achievements

- ✓ Developed a toolkit of activities that can be used with farmer and community groups to discuss gender and land restoration;
- ✓ Established Trainer of Trainers support groups that will support each other to conduct local training workshops on the use of the gender toolkit and activities;
- ✓ Planned 3 to 4 local training events, implementing the toolkit for ongoing land restoration efforts.

<sup>13</sup> Leder S, Das D, Reckers A, Karki E. 2017. Participatory gender training for community groups: a manual for critical discussions on gender norms, roles and relations. Colombo, Sri Lanka: International Water Management Institute; Rome, Italy: CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems.



## Workshop 3: Training the trainers



March 2022



10 wards, Makueni County, Kenya



**Community dialogue objectives**  
(adapted from Leder et al., 2016<sup>14</sup>)

- To initiate discussions that raise awareness about gender roles and norms in the community and how these affect people's engagement with the landscape.
- To reflect on how local gender norms (intersecting with age and other social divides) can generate constraints or opportunities for land restoration activities.
- To generate insights about how gender impacts people's daily lives and ability to engage in land restoration, and how they might take action to change those impacts.

Following the capacity development workshops on co-developing gender transformative approaches for land restoration, eight ward-level Trainer of Trainers (ToT) events were held across ten wards and engaging 319 participants.

**These trainings aimed to train a new cohort of ToTs in the use of community dialogues on gender and land restoration.** Community dialogues are designed to engage communities in an open dialogue on gender perceptions, gender-related constraints and opportunities, and how these influence people's

wellbeing and their ability to engage in land restoration efforts.

The ToTs were led by participants trained at the previous gender workshops (lead ToTs). These smaller ToT training events aimed to field test the co-designed community dialogue activities and ToT scaling model. **Each team of lead ToTs selected a combination of 4 of the 6 community dialogue activities they had been trained in and conducted a one-day training event within their local community.**



14 Leder S, Das D, Reckers A, Karki E. 2017. Participatory gender training for community groups: a manual for critical discussions on gender norms, roles and relations. Colombo, Sri Lanka: International Water Management Institute; Rome, Italy: CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems.



## Community dialogue activity 1: Gender and sex

Adapted from Leder et al (2017)<sup>15</sup> and Jost et al (2014)<sup>16</sup>

The first activity was conducted as one large group and aimed to introduce the concept of gender and the difference between gender and sex, and to explore socially constructed gender roles.

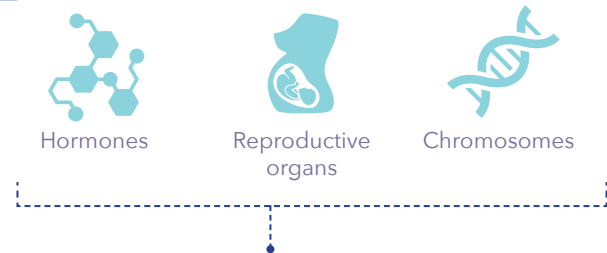
**This activity “helps to show how society and culture play a large role in what it means to be a woman or man and that there is a difference between what we are born as and what society tells us to be”<sup>15</sup>.** Once the activity was completed, participants were asked to reflect on the exercise. Participants found the exercise helpful in identifying how gender roles can and have changed, showing the different strengths of men and women and helping initiate discussion over labour sharing, for example:

- That men can also look after children;
- Driving tractors and heavy machines was earlier known for men only but today we have women engaged in driving heavy machines.
- Women are now involved in ‘hard duties’ such as paying school fees and farm labour such as digging terraces and ploughing by oxen (formally responsibilities of the man).

<sup>15</sup> Leder S, Das D, Reckers A, Karki E. 2017. Participatory gender training for community groups: a manual for critical discussions on gender norms, roles and relations. Colombo, Sri Lanka: International Water Management Institute; Rome, Italy: CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems.

<sup>16</sup> Jost C, Ferdous N, Spicer TD. 2014. Gender and inclusion toolbox: participatory research in climate change and agriculture. Copenhagen, Denmark: CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security; Atlanta GA, USA: CARE International; Nairobi, Kenya: World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF).

**Sex** is biological and ascribed at birth by:



Sex refers to the physical differences between people who are male, female, or intersex. A person typically has their sex ascribed at birth based on physiological characteristics, and is called a person’s ‘natal sex’.

**Gender** refers to socially constructed:



Gender involves how a person identifies and refers to socially constructed characteristics. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being, as well as relationships with each other. These social associations with each gender vary from society to society and can change over time.

**Figure 5:** An illustration of the difference between sex and gender. (Source: CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry. 2021. Training of Trainers Toolkit on Gender and Inclusion in Forest Landscape Restoration. Center for International Forestry Research)



Figure 6: Common characteristics identified by participants for the word 'man' and 'woman'. Words in bold indicate sex-related/biological traits.





Community dialogue activity 2:

## Gender position bar

Adapted from Leder et al (2017)<sup>17</sup>

The second activity encouraged participants to:

- Reflect on the types of labour done by women and men in tree planting activities, on the farm and in the home, and the reasoning behind the division of labour.
- Recognise that the division of labour and restoration activities often leads to a higher work burden for women.
- Assess how we can change.

**All groups identified imbalances in workload with higher numbers of women-only chores compared to men-only chores/activities.** They similarly identified **men as the key decision-makers** in homesteads without involving women. Yet some groups argued that it depends on the location – “where I’m from it is more equal, men and women are both involved in tree planting activities”.

Some tables were very imbalanced, others more balanced due to past projects that had engaged both men and women in tree planting activities.

To rebalance the gender position bars, some of the following actions were identified:



Reduce women-only tasks to ensure there are no women-only or men-only duties but all are shared among both.



Women also agreed to contribute to big financial projects like paying school fees, buying plots of land and cars, amongst others.

One group, however, felt that there is nothing that can be done as the men are always away from the homes during the daytime. They only appear late at night, only to sleep and leave in the morning the following day.

**This exercise was successful in stimulating extensive discussions on gender and the division of labour.** This not only demonstrated the ease at which participants felt comfortable to voice their opinions, but also the willingness to participate in the activity, share and reflect collectively on how things are currently done, and what changes can be made. The participants mentioned that this activity was very helpful in highlighting the different opinions and traditional beliefs that some people hold on gender and the roles and responsibilities attached to it.



Participants discussing how to place activities during the gender position bar activity

<sup>17</sup> Leder S, Das D, Reckers A, Karki E. 2017. Participatory gender training for community groups: a manual for critical discussions on gender norms, roles and relations. Colombo, Sri Lanka: International Water Management Institute; Rome, Italy: CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems.



Community dialogue activity 3:

## Bargaining role-play

Adapted from Leder et al (2017)<sup>18</sup>

Building on the previous exercise, the third activity was a role-play exercise where each group was asked to prepare a short (3-5 minute) role play based on a specified household situation.

In these role plays, participants are encouraged to dress up and act like the opposite gender. **The aim is to develop empathy by getting participants to take the role of the other gender and have conversations with other participants in a farming or household situation.**

One participant emphasised that the role plays help to think about the changes needed and that facilitators and chairs of committees need to be agents of such change.

Additionally, one female participant explained that it was difficult to think like a man when she is a woman. “When you are an adult, you have been used to being and thinking like a woman, it can be difficult to think as if you were a man”. Another male participant added that if you have lived your life with gender expectations and norms then it can be hard to change – these ideas have been planted in their minds for a long time. This highlights the importance of engaging children at a young age and challenging norms around what boys and girls can and can’t do or be.



Participants during the bargaining role play. Photos: ICRAF/Alex Maina

When the women were asked how they felt playing the opposite gender, they responded with “powerful”, “nice”, “strong” while the men responded that they felt “submissive”, “like they had to plead and beg” to be heard and could feel the “weight” of being a woman.

Despite the positive response to this exercise, some female participants similarly felt that men were actively involved in the exercise given that it was just role play, but that in reality, they would not wish to be involved, or willingly carry-out most of the household activities.



*“The role-plays during the training showed how men downplay women, especially when they present ideas, and the need for dialogue to reduce or avoid conflicts at home.”*

–Gedeon Kituku Nzioka, ToT trainee

<sup>18</sup> Leder S, Das D, Reckers A, Karki E. 2017. Participatory gender training for community groups: a manual for critical discussions on gender norms, roles and relations. Colombo, Sri Lanka: International Water Management Institute; Rome, Italy: CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems.



## Community dialogue activity 4:

# Developing progress markers

Adapted from Mohanraj et al (2015)<sup>19</sup>

For this activity, participants separated into men and women and discussed the changes that they would like to see from the opposite sex in four key categories:

- Gender division of labour
- Household negotiation and decision making
- Control of income and productive assets
- Self-confidence and harmony in relationship

Once completed, the groups came together to present their lists and discuss the changes they would like to see. **The aim of the activity is to discuss priority gender issues and develop shared goals and actions for change.**

Common changes from both men and women groups were:

- Respect each other and their opinions and to consider everyone in decision making.
- Take responsibility for the decisions and ensure the success of their families.
- Appreciate one another and respect each other.
- Be actively involved in running their homes.

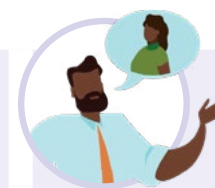
What is concerning is that while the majority of the changes women would like to see involved being respected more and included in decision making, many of the changes men wanted to see from women can be seen as regressive, such as “women to be submissive”, and to “be responsible for their behaviour”. More of the changes are captured in the table.

**Table 1:** Changes that workshop participants would like to see from the opposite gender.



### Changes women want to see from men

- Equal distribution of labour
- Involve women in planning, implementation and equal sharing of income
- Collaborate on family planning methods to ensure women are safe
- Give women and children opportunities to own property in their families
- Involve women and mature children in nearly all family decision making both on domestic and farm activities



### Changes men want to see from women

- Women to participate in decision-making processes
- Women to assist men in the heavy roles and duties
- Women should dress well and ensure personal hygiene
- Women should be ready for family reconciliation and be responsible for their behaviour
- Women should learn to appreciate their men in the smaller and bigger things they do
- Women should avoid demanding men to help them in household chores especially when there are other people to help
- Women should give a helping hand towards activities like fencing the homestead, ploughing, digging terraces, among others
- Involve men in family planning
- Women should be confidential on matters pertaining to their own family
- Women to be submissive

<sup>19</sup> Mohanraj, P and Hillenbrand, E. 2015. Transformative Tools for Monitoring Gender Behavior Change. CARE USA. American Evaluation Association (AEA) 2015. Session 1807: Feminist Issues in Evaluation.



## Community dialogue activity 5: Vision journey

Adapted from Reemer et al (2015)<sup>20</sup>

This activity asked participants to individually reflect on how they would like their farms to be in a 'happy future' and to then **identify one restoration practice and concrete goal** from their vision they think they can achieve in 18 months, then visually **map out the actions needed to achieve this restoration goal**. The aim of the activity is to build knowledge and skills in planning for the future.



Participants drawing their vision for the future. Photo: ICRAF/Ann Wavinya



Figure 7: Common features of participants' visions for the future, as well as some of the main challenges that were identified to achieving these goals.

20 Reemer T, Makanza M. 2015. Gender action learning system: practical guide for transforming gender and unequal power relations in value chains. The Hague, Netherlands: Oxfam Novib.



Community dialogue activity 6:

## Gender balance tree

Adapted from Reemer et al (2015)<sup>21</sup>

The final exercise builds on the vision journey and aims to **identify gender inequalities in work contribution, control over income and expenditure at household level.**

Participants individually drew a tree representing their household and identified the balance of different tasks, spending and contribution and decisions in the household. Participants then related some of the opportunities and constraints in their Vision Journey with the imbalances at household level identified in the gender balance tree. Lastly, participants decided whether their household tree is balanced, and identified priority areas for improving the gender balance tree and achieving their restoration goals.

Common imbalances identified by people in their balance trees included:

- Women have less responsibilities for the benefit of the family as compared to men.
- Chicken rearing was attached to the elderly in the community as compared to youth.
- Decisions are mostly made by men.
- Men are ones who control family assets and income.
- Women are more involved in activities that build families, but which don't generate income like cooking, washing, giving birth etc.
- Men are mostly involved in tree species selection but not in full management practices.



Participants drawing a gender balance tree for their household.  
Photos: ICRAF/Ann Wavinya

Proposed actions by participants to balance gender inequality and achieve their vision goals



Both men and women be actively involved in caring for the family.



Joint sharing of resources and decision making.



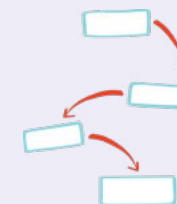
Both genders control family assets and income.



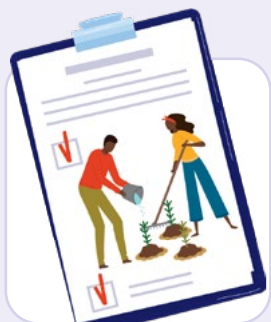
Both sexes to reduce unnecessary expenses and their personal expenses.



Men should help women in tree planting and management practices and other land restoration activities for improved sustainability.



Start planning for the future as soon as they leave the training.



# Workshop 4: Reflections on the gender transformative approach



12-13 April 2022



Tawa (Mbooni East) and Kibwezi Town (Kibwezi East), Makueni County, Kenya



## Workshop objectives

- Share and reflect on the challenges and successes of the gender and land restoration trainings and community dialogues;
- Synthesize and document the lessons learned;
- Identify opportunities for improving the ToT model and scaling in Makueni County.

The reflection workshops on gender and restoration reconvened 83 of the lead ToTs and newly trained ToTs from the ward-level trainings to reflect on the lessons learned from the gender and land restoration training and identify opportunities for further scaling. Specifically, it sought to provide a platform to learn about what has been working well, what can be improved and what needs to be changed or updated. This learning process allows us – as individuals and as a group – to recognise what capacities and knowledge we need to strengthen or develop to improve our work as gender ToTs.

Being able to reflect and share in a safe space is essential for improvement. The tool, **'How are we doing?'** developed by CIFOR, was adapted for this workshop. This tool was designed to enable participatory reflective monitoring in multi-stakeholder forums. Specifically, 'How are we doing?' supports enabling conditions to allow the MSF to achieve its goal(s) equitably and effectively.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Barletti, J.P.S., Larson, A.M., Cisneros, N., Liswanti, N., Mariño, H. & Tamara, A. 2020. How are we doing? A tool to reflect on the process, progress and priorities of your multi-stakeholder forum. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR.



Strengths	How many people?				Average score
	Strengths	Progress	Challenges	Agree	
...	...	...	...	...	2.6
...	...	...	...	...	3.8
...	...	...	...	...	3.9
...	...	...	...	...	1.6
...	...	...	...	...	2.2
...	...	...	...	...	3.9
...	...	...	...	...	3.6
...	...	...	...	...	4.4
...	...	...	...	...	3.7
...	...	...	...	...	1

## Key insights and lessons learnt

While project participants recognize that changing disempowering norms may take time and continued efforts, many have reported **positive indicators of change following the training on community dialogues**.

During the gender reflection workshops, 75% of ToTs agreed (57%) or strongly agreed (18%) with the statement, “the training has had a positive impact within the community”. Examples of positive impacts include:

- **Increased sharing of household chores** – for instance, male ToTs report that since the training, they have started assisting their wives in various household duties such as going to the market to buy food, bathing young children, and taking them to the clinic.
- **Stronger bonds between couples and even reduced conflict and violence**, given the training’s focus on negotiation and household harmony.
- **Increased openness of participation in public participation meetings** in their community and that women and youths voices are now heard during such meetings.

*“One lesson I picked up from the training is that it’s important for husbands to listen and involve their wives in decision-making, whether on which crops to grow on the farm or which restoration practices to adopt, to be successful and for peace in the homes”*

–Francis Mutava Maithya, ToT trainee



Such changes in community perceptions and behaviour (i.e., increased collaboration, joint decision making and equitable benefit sharing in household land restoration) are expected to continue beyond the project.

**Through the establishment of the ToT scaling model – where those trained are equipped with the skills to train others in their community – the project has been able to reach many beneficiaries in a short amount of time.** Furthermore, the use of a co-design approach where ToTs are encouraged to adapt activities and design their own training events has led to greater community ownership of implementing and scaling activities.

During the reflection workshop, 100% of ToTs agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “community dialogues can improve the success and sustainability of land restoration” and “can transform gender relations in our communities”. The potential for continued change was also recognized by government officers:

*“I know that no one here will leave today how they arrived thanks to this training”*

–Dinah Matheka, Ward Administrator: Mbooni East

## Key recommendations from the gender reflection workshops on how to improve the community dialogues and ToT training

*“This is a one-of-a-kind training that will have multiplier effects in the community. I urge every officer and person trained here today to reach those in the community who are not here. Gender is a cross cutting issue for our communities and the work we’ve done here will be a game changer for our future trainings.”*

–Thomas Tuta, Kibwezi East  
Sub-County Administrator



Train couples to ensure greater change in intra-household relations and harmony.



Cascade the ToT training to the local levels (cluster and village).



Select ‘lead’ ToTs to spearhead the scaling of the training.



Conduct periodic refresher training for ToTs and training in facilitation skills.



Lengthen the trainings from 1 to 2 days for local level training.



Hold ToT trainings in the villages so they are accessible to those with limited means and disabilities.



# Key achievements and take-homes

Through the project's various GESI (gender, equality and social inclusion)-focused capacity development workshops and Trainer of Trainers scaling approach, **over 300 beneficiaries have been trained in the use of community dialogues**. These dialogues involved a series of group activities designed to engage communities in an open dialogue on gender perceptions and encourage critical reflection and awareness of how gender roles, relations, and stereotypes impact households' capacities to engage effectively in land restoration.

**Changes resulting from these training events have included:**

- Increased awareness amongst beneficiaries of the importance of gender and social inclusion in the design, implementation, and realisation of land restoration and the need for appropriate strategies for achieving GESI-related goals.
- Substantially strengthened capacity by beneficiaries to apply gender-transformative approaches to restoration efforts.

**These changes in awareness and capacity are reflected in the continued demand from participants for further training** in the use of gender transformative approaches and cascading training to the cluster and village level. Several groups of ToTs



have taken the initiative to organise and conduct their own additional ToT training events with minimal support from the project, demonstrating the perceived value of the skills and knowledge beneficiaries have gained from their engagement with the project and training.

## Local ownership

**The use of a ToT model has also enabled transformative participation.** By co-developing the activities and supporting those trained to design and hold their own ToT training events, there is a **high level of local ownership over project activities and their scaling**. Furthermore, the reflection workshops

offered an opportunity for ToTs to come together and reflect on what has gone well, what can be done better and what needs to change or be updated (both in terms of the training content and support from ICRAF).

*During the gender reflection workshops, which brought together ToTs to reflect on and synthesise the lessons learned and chart the way forward for further trainings, 93% of ToTs reported that they either agreed (69%) or strongly agreed (24%) with the statement, "we have the skills and knowledge to train others in the use of community dialogues."*

## Key factors from the project that enabled change

**The engaging nature of the training material.** The majority of the participants were surprised by the active and engaging training, as they had previously expected that it would be “a boring lecture on gender by a professor”.

**Holding the ToT training events in the local language (Kikamba)** and by members of the local community and administration has been key to scaling the activities at the local level and ensuring ToTs understand the material and engage actively in the training.

### Gender balance among participants.

All workshops and training events included near equal numbers of men and women (i.e., 52% women, 48% men). This was important for ensuring the voices of both men and women were heard and facilitated open discussion and learning among participants.



**The project worked closely with local government officers not only from the departments of environment and climate change but also those related to gender, youth, and social services,** to identify key stakeholders to invite to training, including representatives from marginalised groups (e.g., HIV support groups, youth groups, women’s groups and persons with disabilities).

Working with the **administrative structures of Makeni** and engaging with administrators and officers at multiple levels from county, sub-county, and ward levels.



**Trained ToT’s were awarded certificates** that serve as evidence of their attendance and training in the use of community dialogues, as well as a badge to identify them as a ToT in gender and land restoration. This again, has helped the ToTs to have ownership and take leadership over the scaling of the training. These items were produced by the project in response to beneficiaries’ request to have some form of identification as ToTs when working within their local communities.

## Continuing to initiate open dialogue and raise critical awareness

While changing disempowering cultural attitudes and norms can take time, building capacity in the use of gender-transformative approaches, such as those taught during the workshops, is a crucial first step to this change.

*Initiating open dialogue and raising critical awareness of gender inequality is key to changing narratives and identifying opportunities for achieving both equitable and sustainable restoration outcomes.*

The activities used throughout this project have helped create space for discussing sensitive topics and for people to react and reflect on their views and the perspectives of others. Through simulating and engaging scenarios, the activities allow participants to develop collective visions for the future and map the actions needed to achieve more inclusive and equitable restoration outcomes.

The next steps for the project include further cascading the training in community dialogues and ToT model to the village level and integrating the use of the community dialogue activities with technical training in the use of sustainable land management and restoration practices. Scaling out these trainings to other sub-counties in Makueni and to other counties will help address some of the barriers to land restoration and hence achieve impact at scale.

“

*Through asking, ‘How are things now?’ and ‘How would you like things to be?’, the activities allow participants to negotiate collective visions for the future and identify the actions needed to achieve inclusive and equitable restoration outcomes.*”

- Mary Crossland, associate scientist at CIFOR-ICRAF and workshop facilitator



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