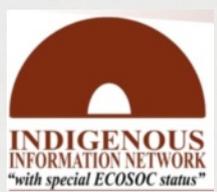
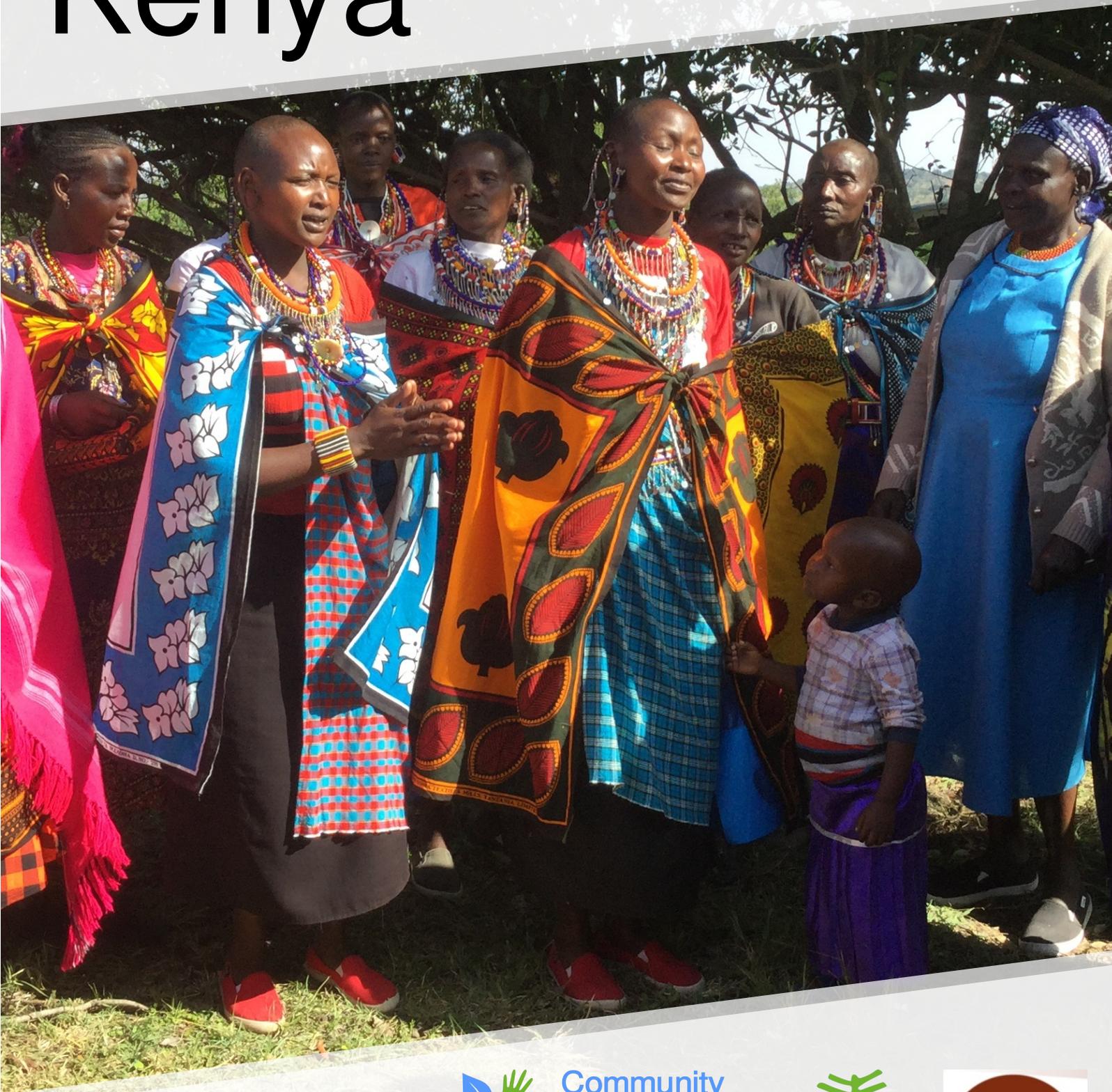


Report of the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative in Kenya



**Country report on Kenya
Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI)
February 2018**

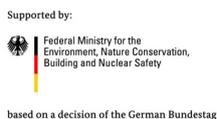
Author: Edna Kaptoyo

Assessment facilitation: Indigenous Information Network, coordinated by Lucy Mullenkei

For more information: <http://globalforestcoalition.org/resources/supporting-community-conservation/>

Cover photo: Indigenous women gathering during the community meeting in Kimintet, Lolgorian Trans-Mara.
Edna Kaptoyo/GFC

The production of this country report has been made possible thanks to the support of the Christensen Fund and the German International Climate Initiative (IKI). The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) supports this initiative on the basis of a decision adopted by the German Bundestag. The participatory community assessments reflected in this report have been made possible thanks to the community members themselves, Indigenous Information Network, The Christensen Fund, and the Siemenpuu Foundation.



Disclaimer:

The information contained in the case studies in this report has been provided by the national group responsible. As such, the report does not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of GFC, its donors or other contributors.

Country report on Kenya Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) December 2017

FINAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY CONSERVATION RESILIENCE INITIATIVE IN COMMUNITIES IN MARSABIT COUNTY AND TRANSMARA NAROK COUNTY, KENYA

Author: Edna Kaptoyo

Assessment facilitation: Indigenous Information Network, coordinated by Lucy Mulenkei

Introduction

In Kenya the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) was implemented by Indigenous Information Network (IIN), a Non Governmental Organization operating in Kenya in partnership with communities in Kimintet Nyekweri Forest Trust TransMara sub county in Narok County and Kargi, Korr, Kamboye, Logologo in Marsabit County.

This report explains how the goal of the initiative to sustain and strengthen the resilience of community conservation practices, including Indigenous Peoples' and community conserved territories and areas in light of existing or potential external and internal threats have been achieved in Kenya.

The main objective of the Kenya CCRI was to perform a bottom up assessment of the resilience of Indigenous peoples communities conservation, their restoration approaches and assess community concerns and the assessment the legal, political, socio-economic, financial, technical, and capacity-building support that could assist in sustaining and strengthening such initiatives and approaches, and subsequently to secure those forms of support through strategic advocacy efforts.

The overall aim of the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) is to contribute to the implementation of the CBD's 2011-2020 Strategic Plan and Aichi Targets by providing policy advice on effective and appropriate forms of support for community conservation.

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION RESILIENCE INITIATIVE IN KENYA

The Community Conservation resilience Initiative (CCRI) was carried out with two indigenous communities, the Maasai peoples of Trans-Mara, Narok County and the Rendille peoples of Kargi, Kamboye, Korr and Loglogo of Marsabit County.

The choice of the two CCRI areas was informed by the richness in biodiversity and similar sustainable livelihood practice of pastoralism in these areas and having few of the remaining indigenous forests in Kenya as well their differences, Nyekweri Kimintet in Transmara being a community forest area and Marsabit an arid and semi-land with dependence on forest.

TransMara sub county is located in south-western Kenya and forms part of the Mara ecosystem and Mara river basin and provides ecosystem services such as river flow regulations, wildlife habitat etc . It has population of 168,000 people, majority being Maasai indigenous peoples with other tribes moving in over the past few decades because of much better farming opportunities. It has an area of 2,900km² and neighbours the famous Maasai Mara National Reserve. According to African Perspectives 2011 article on Kenya, Natural corridors link TransMara and Maasai Mara National reserve creating important corridors for wildlife movement between the two areas. Within TransMara there is Nyekweri forest which is the last remaining indigenous forest in TransMara with a total area of 216km². The community forest is owned by two group ranches Olorien and Kimintet, both of which underwent land subdivision. Kimintet community members formed the Nyekweri Forest Kimintet Trust in 2005 to continue conservation of biodiversity after the subdivision of land and destruction of the Nyekweri Olorien forest area. Nyekweri Kimintet Forest covers 6000 acres of land. For eons, the community around Nyekweri Kimintet have lived in harmony with wildlife and conserved the forests through values and customary laws. The community forest trust was supported by World Wildlife Fund Kenya (WWF-K) to form the trust and in training of community game scouts.

The Kimintet Forest and its surrounding area inhabitants practice purely pastoralism as the main livelihood since time immemorial-wildlife destroys food crops. The area is occupied by Maasai indigenous peoples and is social and culturally significant since it hosts sacred sites, provides them with medicinal plants, honey, fodder for livestock, building materials and wood fuel among other things. This area is characterized by forests, wildlife, grassland and River Mara. The forest is home to diverse wildlife like Buffaloes, Elephants, Waterbucks, Impalas, Leopards, etc. More than 200 species of birds including Turacos, Trogons, Eagles, Wood-hoopoes, Hornbills, etc .It is an important dispersal area and dry season refuge for wildlife and breeding ground for elephants. The forest is dominated by huge trees of

diasporus abyssinica, olea capensis, olea Africana, african greenheart, Manilkara Butugi, ficus thoningii etc

Marsabit County is located in the extreme part of northern Kenya and has a total area of 70,961.2 sq km (CRA,2013) and is often described as the giant arid, semi-arid and deserts surrounding two green islands – referring to Mt. Marsabit and Mt. Kulal forests and the open grassland of Hurri Hills. The most notable topographical feature of the county and project focus area is Mt. Marsabit which is the only gazetted indigenous forest in the county. Mt. Marsabit Forest plays a very critical role in biodiversity, water conservation, tourism, wildlife, and the socio-economic well-being of communities living adjacent to it and is an important water tower in north eastern Kenya. It functions as a recharge point for water sources in the area which emanates from mist condensate on species of saprophytic moss plants living on indigenous forest trees since there are no permanent rivers in the county, but four drainage systems exist, covering an area of 948 sq km, with grasslands, agro-pastoral activities (CIDP,2013).

According to the 2009 National Population and Housing Census, the county's projected population was 372,931 people in 2017. Livestock keeping is the main economic activity in the county. The main livestock bred include approximately 424,603 cattle, some 1,143,480 goats, 960,004 sheep, 203,320 camels, etc and livestock products are milk, beef, mutton and camel meat. The assessment area of focus was in Loglogo, Korr, Kamboye and Kargi communities whose inhabitants are Rendille peoples.

Marsabit County is inarguably the largest and most expansive County in Kenya occupying about 16 percent of Kenya's total land mass. The Rendille peoples had strong connection with the environment and their values related to conservation is rooted in their culture. Some of the sacred trees and places are still intact in Kargi. Traditionally they cut down tree branches only when needed for constructing their houses and collected dead trees for firewood. Medicine and herbs were also extracted in sustainable way to avoid damaging trees. As pastoralists the community had planned migratory routes for their livestock which allowed for regeneration of vegetation.

Community Conservation Resilience Process In Kenya

Indigenous Information Network (IIN) in undertaking the community conservation resilience assessment in Kenya, utilized the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative methodology framework that comprised of 5 crosscutting principles and 9 key components. The crosscutting principles include Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' Rights, including the right to free, prior and informed consent, indigenous & community ownership, adaptive facilitation, participation & representation and lastly women and gender. IIN selected two communities for the assessment ,

consulted the relevant communities and sought their free prior and informed consent for the process, defined the community in terms of location, history, environment and conservation practices, assessed the potential threats, established methods for assessing community resilience and how it can be improved and set up the coordination mechanism for the assessment. It also assisted in the organization of a national capacity building workshop, facilitated a participatory assessment in the two communities and the strategic visioning, planning and consolidation process amongst each of the two communities.

IIN facilitated the translation of CCRI English resource paper into Kiswahili which is a widely spoken language, this was distributed during community meetings and in different environmental foras.

In the two community assessment areas, free prior and informed consent (FPIC) was obtained from community members to inform them about the process and the CCRI assessment. In order to obtain FPIC in CCRI sites community representatives were informed via telephone and face to face meeting. As well during the national CCRI workshop, community members from TransMara Kimintet had small meeting and expressed their willingness to participate in the project. Communities in TransMara and Marsabit agreed to participate in the Assessment.

The CCRI assessments employed a participatory approach that included having focused group discussions, sketch mapping and story telling to assess the biodiversity and threats to conservation and proposed solutions within the Nyekweri Kimintet Forest and Marsabit communities.

In Kimintet site, CCRI involved two meetings with community committee structures with local leaders presence. In the initial phase of CCRI ,a one-day workshop was held at Kilgoris town with more than 20 community members and two indigenous women in attendance. The second meeting in Kimintet site was attended by more than 80 community members with nearly half being women. In Marsabit there were meetings that was well attended by more than 30 indigenous women leaders and members representing different women groups since it was drought period, the men in the community except the chief had migrated with livestock in search of pasture in far part of the county.

The assessments processes for both Nyekweri TransMara and Marsabit site areas revealed unique internal and external threats for each site and some shared similarities in the threats.

The Gender Dimension

In the two sites, the indigenous women are primary care givers and few are represented in decision making bodies within the community. Only a few women participated in the first workshop of the Nyewkeri Kimintet resulting in a separate meeting for the Maasai indigenous women to be organized. This was later followed later by joint meeting for all community members where more women were present and men committed to involve the women in decision making process. For Marsabit CCRI, the women made up 99% of the participants with local chief participating, this was due to the drought season resulting in migration of men. Patriarchy is still an issue in both communities, with women perceived as inferior and all the decision making being done by men since ownership of land is by men. However, the indigenous women from the two communities highlighted the fact that they have been playing key role in conservation of biodiversity and holders of traditional knowledge relevant for conservation and ensure inter-generational learning and transmission of knowledge and values. The women are also mostly the sole breadwinners of their households raising their income through sale of beadwork for the both Rendille and Maasai indigenous women and cultural center for the Rendillle women of Loglogo. Traditionally the Rendile and Maasai indigenous women are tasked with constructing houses for the family in both communities and are continuing with the practice to date. Some of the indigenous women from Rendille in Marsabit have been involved in advocacy against extractive industry activities that have been initiated in their community without their free prior and informed consent and consultation and are active in community environment committees. However, the Nyekweri Kimintet indigenous women have no formal education and have not been participating in any decision making process due to lack of capacity.

The CCRI project sites clearly demonstrated that conservation is gendered. While women are the primary caretakers incharge of domestic chores such as fetching water, getting fuel wood from forests, cooking, taking care of children and constructing the homes, the men were responsible of taking care of livestock. The communities in the two project sites are every patriarchal nature and this means that elders who sit in communal leadership spaces exclude women in the community decision making.

Chapter IV of the Kenyan Constitution on the Bill of Rights calls for non-discrimination and states every person has equal treatment before the law and has the rights to equal protection and benefit of the law. Women and men have the right to equal treatment, including the right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural and social sphere. Both direct and indirect discrimination is forbidden. Kenya has set up affirmative action programmes and policies designed to redress any disadvantage suffered by individuals or groups who are women and set up the National on Gender and

Equality Commission (NGEC). Despite these measures being in place to ensure non-discrimination of women, practice continues due to culture and beliefs that need continuous community conversations to influence men to support women in decision making.

CCRI process ensured that it was gender sensitive by ensuring that women's participation was facilitated. This was especially important because these communities are very patriarchal, and women are often not heard when it comes to issues on lands and territories. With the realization of challenges in the Kimintet with women participation, as well as noting the high level of illiteracy, all meetings aimed to have at least 50% women, and held separate meetings for the women participants so they could share their perspectives freely. IIN ensured translation in indigenous languages was available for easy communication.

The important need to empower indigenous women groups to have a viable economic livelihood, to share their perspectives and participate in decision making through capacity building and facilitating exchange visits among women groups from different parts of Kenya was evident. During the community meetings, all community members agreed that women play an important role in conservation and hold crucial ecological knowledge that is needed for proper decision making. At the community level, it was also mentioned that there was less involvement of women in land-related decision making, and a call for inclusion in land-related decision making was highlighted. At a national level, laws that promote gender equality exist and devolved governance units are supposed to support the implementation. For instance, the community land reforms are geared towards ensuring gender equality and tenure security, however, awareness among indigenous women of these rights and roles needs to be enhanced so they can demand respect of their right to participation. This requires training for indigenous women on the different laws that relate to environment and gender equality.

Strategic vision

The Kenyan assessment was to facilitate a bottom-up assessment process and contribute to the sustaining and strengthening of community resilience by coming with recommendations for managing the social ecosystem and improved livelihood for the peoples.

Law and Policy Framework

Kenya's legal framework for environmental management and conservation has greatly transitioned in the past two decades. The first was the enactment of the 1999 Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA) which recognized for the first time the right of every person to a clean and healthy

environment and gave every person locus standi to institute a case for any environmental rights violation (Ang'wenyi,2008). The main aim of these changes was to ensure that the existing legal framework effectively addresses environmental problems and that the environmental conservation efforts are fully supported by the law and is in line with the Constitution of Kenya 2010 (CoK 2010). The legal framework for environmental management and governance therefore is the Constitution of Kenya 2010, Environment Management and Co-ordination Act, 1999 and any other law that has an impact on the environment.

COK 2010 elevated environmental rights and environmental issues generally to constitutional status under the Bill of rights. These two significant yardsticks brought about both normative and institutional transformation to environmental rights regime with approximately 77 statutes dealing with environmental issues. These include the adoption of a number of environmental policies and regulations, as well as strategies for biodiversity conservation and management of natural resources.

Article 42 of constitution states that,

"Every person has the right to a clean and healthy environment, which includes the right—(a) to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations through legislative and other measures, particularly those contemplated in Article 69; and (b) to have obligations relating to the environment fulfilled under Article 70".

Article 70(1) guarantees clean environment as a claimable right by any member who feels that his rights to a clean environment has been infringed. This article provides that,"If a person alleges that a right to a clean and healthy environment recognized and protected under Article 42 has been, is being or is likely to be, denied, violated, infringed or threatened, the person may apply to a court for redress in addition to any other legal remedies that are available in respect to the same matter.

Article 69 sets out certain obligations of both the state and persons in respect of the environment. The Article creates several obligations in respect to the environment by obligation on the state to ensure sustainable exploitation, utilization, management and conservation of the environment and natural resources, and ensure the equitable sharing of the accruing benefits and encourage public participation in the management, protection and conservation of the environment.

The Constitution also provides for the principle of public participation as one of the Principles and values of governance under Article 10. To enhance public participation, the Constitution has established a devolved system of governance which gives every citizen at the lowest level of the

society an opportunity to participate in governance process including environmental governance.

The Fourth Schedule to the Constitution details the distribution of functions between the national and county governments. With regard to the environment, the national government is responsible for the protection of the environment and natural resources and the implementation of specific national government policies on natural resources and environmental conservation.

The Environmental Management and Coordination Act, 1999 (EMCA) provides for the establishment of an appropriate legal and institutional framework for the an appropriate management of the environment. The National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) an institution created by the Act is mandated to play a supervisory role and co-ordinate all matters relating to the environment and to be the principal tool of Government in the implementation of policies relating to the environment. There are also the local environment committees that are the decentralization of environmental management and enables participation by the local communities. There is also the public complaints committee which plays a vital role of providing the administrative mechanism for addressing environmental harm.

The Land Act, 2012 recognizes that customary land rights have equal recognition with freehold and leasehold rights and may not be discriminated against. The Community Land Act 2016 came into force to give effect to Article 63 (5) of the Constitution that provides on community land. The Act specifically provides for the recognition, protection and registration of community land rights, management and administration of community land and the role of county governments in relation to unregistered community land. However, this law has not yet been implemented at county level. Indigenous peoples in Marsabit county community lands still nearly 80% are held in trust by county government, this exposes the community to land rights violations.

Kenya is signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and has taken steps to implement its National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan 2011-2020 with a number of actions in place to meet the targets with the adaptation of the climate change action plan and climate change act 2016 among others. In collaboration with stakeholders, including Indigenous peoples, the ministry of environment is in the process of revising and updating the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) as an overarching framework in conservation management. The latest National report to the CBD acknowledge the role of communities and indigenous knowledge in biodiversity conservation.

Other biodiversity related laws in Kenya are the Wildlife Management and Conservation Act 2013 which provides for protection, conservation and

management of wildlife in Kenya and related matters. The Act shall apply to all wildlife resources on public, community and private land.

The Forest Conservation and Management Act is the legislation that exclusively deals with the protection of forests. Under the Constitution, forests are specifically defined as natural resources, all national forests are defined to be public land save for community forests that are vested in the communities and classified as community land. Aside from the definition and the legal regime within which national and community forests are held, the Constitution does not specifically provide for the conservation and preservation of forests, it only states that land laws enacted should protect, conserve and provide access to public land. It is interesting to note that whereas forests are defined as natural resources along with biodiversity and genetic resources, obligations toward biodiversity and genetic resources are provided for in Part Two of Chapter Five discussing Environment separate from forests that are provided for in Part 1 discussing Land. Needless to say, forests are a component of the environment and the obligations in respect to the environment should naturally apply to forests even though they are seen here to be more of public land than an integral component of the environment. The Act further states that community forests include forests on land lawfully registered in the name of group or representatives, forests on land declared to be community and or forest managed or used by specific community as community forests. Despite the legislation still the Kimintet Nyekweri community CCRI site have secure tenure but are not offered full protection by law concerning illegal logging and wildlife poaching or other activities. However, according to the law, the KFS can enter into agreement to manage jointly with community indigenous forests, this can be an opportunity and a challenge for community forest like Kimintet Nyekweri. Mt. Marsabit forest is a national reserve hence managed by county government and Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and not considered community forest. This limits community access to the forests. Kenya recognizes the sacred site in natural sites but this has not been effectively addressed in the legal framework and doesn't cover most regions that are sacred sites for indigenous peoples.

Community Participation in forest conservation and management is largely discussed in this Act. Members of a forest community may register a community forest association and may apply to the Service to participate in the conservation and management of a public forest and KFS may grant the forest community certain forest user rights, these rights are as follows; collection of medicinal herbs, harvesting of honey, harvesting of timber or fuel wood grass harvesting and grazing etc. However, strong community forest association does not exist in the region to support community participation in management of the forests.

THREATS IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE CCRI PROCESS: Internal and external threats to community conservation

The assessment revealed that in the past the Nyekweri Kimintet Forest and Marsabit was abundant with flora and fauna, but it has now decreased in some areas, as the mapping revealed.

Nyekweri Kimintet Forest TransMara

During the assessments community members from Nyekweri Kimintet were able to identify key external threats and internal threats to conservation.

Internal Threats

Erosion of traditional knowledge

The main internal threats mentioned was the erosion of cultural values and norms governing conservation, which is due to privatization of lands and loss of traditional ecological knowledge as well as attitudinal change towards conservation of forests. The youth are also leaving the community to find employment elsewhere.

Over exploitation of resources resulting in loss of biodiversity

Despite the high value of the socio-cultural and ecosystem services that biodiversity offers, the rapid land use changes and land fragmentation that is driving a loss of flora and fauna.

Unsustainable cutting/illegal logging for energy (wood fuel and charcoal)

A significant internal threat is the deforestation due to charcoal burning and fuel wood harvesting. Demand for charcoal, fuel wood and lack of income generating activities make some community people and other migrants to engage in charcoal business.

Overgrazing

Poor livestock husbandry marred by overstocking and overgrazing exacerbating the soil erosion problem. This is also as a result of cultural belief of equating wealth status with the number of livestock a family holds.

Poverty and lack of livelihood options

Samuel Wuantai, a community member of Nyekweri Kimintet, posited that forest destruction is happening because of poverty and ignorance. There are no support for creation of eco-tourism initiative for the community so they could get income and employment and continue protecting the environment.

Land sub division

The testimony of Naila Maasai a community member of Kimintet expressed this concerns well; “I can now see that it was wrong for land subdivision to be done in the community, it impacted conservation since private land owners make their own decisions on land use”.

External Threats

Non enforcement of legislation

Lack of legal protection of community forest by the county and national laws or institutions tasked with providing the protection. The legal framework recognizes community forest roles in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services but does not support them in strengthening their conservation.

Weak institutional frameworks

National and local forest and wildlife authorities do not work in community forest conservation areas. Since 2005, though, a number of PES schemes have been set up in conservancies on private land bordering the Maasai Mara National Reserve, but Kimintet community are yet to benefit.

Climate change

Increased impact of drought due to climate change has resulted in the loss of biodiversity. Most livestock keepers from other parts of Narok county move to TransMara during dry periods ,this puts pressure on biodiversity. Drought also causes low yields for pasture leading to serious loss of livestock and wildlife at times of drought, weakening communities resilience.

Conflict

Due to impacts of climate change on freshwater availability, there is competition for water sources between people and wildlife resulting in conflict.

Lack of political support

Lack of political support by local county authorities tasked with implementing legislation results in weak governance. Poor policy implementation resulting from weak institutions as a result of insufficient political will to prioritise resources allocation to sustainable conservation initiatives.

Preliminary Conclusions and Recommendations: Nyekweri Kimintet

The vision of Nyekweri Kimintet community members is to sustain the forests for future generations and sustenance. They want the children to learn the values of conservation and continue with their traditional practices.

Community proposed solutions for internal and external threats included;

- (i) Call for support to experience exchange visits to other wildlife conservation areas for practical learning and adaptation of best practices
- (ii) Strengthening linkages with county and national government environment, Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and Kenya Wildlife Service(KWS) authorities.
- (iii) The community needs financial support and incentives for management of the conservation on area to carry out reforestation initiatives to restore degraded areas and indigenous species and pay volunteer game scouts who monitor the conservation area.
- (iv) Development of community protocols to complement national laws and regulate community interaction with the land and to implement pasture and land management system was discussed.
- (v) Awareness raising amongst other community members and sharing information on existing national legislations to support engagement with policy makers to ensure support for enforcement of laws and strong political will.

Preliminary recommendations included the call to strengthen Nyekweri Kimintet trust as an institution to enhance community participation in sustainable conservation and adoption of wildlife resource as a viable option through setting up of eco-tourism business.

Community Conservation Resilience in Marsabit

Marsabit is rich in biodiversity with about 20 per cent of land areas characterised by deciduous Bush and Shrublands and indigenous tree species is experiencing some threats. Poaching and uncontrolled harvesting are major contributors to the decline of biodiversity. The seriousness of poaching is well known, especially in relation to elephants and rhino. The grass species *Duosperma eromophilum* and *detonix* basal tree species are threatened (KFS).

During the assessments the Rendille community members from Kamboye, Kargi, Loglogo and Korr identified some common internal and external threats to conservation. The sketch mapping exercise enabled the community members to better assess the landscape transformation. The common threats are deforestation and soil degradation as main internal threat which is driven by demand for wood, charcoal and overgrazing of livestock as internal threat resulting in loss of key tree species and wild animals. This threat is also partly attributed to external actors like other community members outside the community and illegally settle in the land during drought seasons particularly in Loglogo community. The erosion of traditional knowledge and values, now use of resources is not controlled and migration routes are not followed. Population increase and sedenterisation has also put pressure on the environment, poor waste disposal of polythene bags, ignorance by people of customary laws governing use of resources and conservation and impacts of extractive industries like sand harvesting were also raised. Community members identified external threats as the overgrowth of introduced invasive species called velvet mesquite or *Prosopis juliflora* "mathenge" a tree species that is widespread in Marsabit and for a long time has been considered a menace by the residents due to its negative effects to livestock and indigenous species in the areas (KFS). The Environmental Management Coordination Act requires that any introduction of alien species for whatever purposes require an environmental impact assessment (EIA) license to be considered legal. In this case EIA was done but not the social impact assessment.

The report of Marsabit County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP,2013) agrees to the findings that environmental degradation in the county is mainly a result of deforestation and forest encroachment due to dependence on firewood and overgrazing. Inadequate solid waste collection and its disposal, coupled with unsustainable management practices of ecosystems and their inherent biodiversity, are major contributors to environmental degradation in the county. Other contributors to environmental degradation include non-compliance with the law due to weak enforcement of the environmental provisions, inadequate disposal of non-biodegradable materials like plastics

and polythene, low levels of environmental awareness and low social responsibility on environmental matters at individual and community levels.

Mt. Marsabit Forest continues to suffer wanton destruction of hardwood species over the last few decades as the population of both urban and rural Marsabit grew beyond the sustainable capacity of the forest to yield wood products and water recharge. By the end of 2010, all wetlands in the forest, such as the famous lakes Paradise and Sokorte, dried up completely following the drying up of the natural springs that were their main sources of water. This means that the community whose recharge source is Marsabit forest were also affected. The result of deforestation and forest encroachment is due to dependence on firewood and overgrazing. Wildlife species like elephants, rhinos and buffalos population have decreased in Marsabit in the past years due to poaching and deforestation including the species found in the plains like ostrich, gazelles etc. Over-exploitation of biomass driven by high energy demand for industrial and domestic use poses a serious threat to biodiversity. The use of inefficient technologies in charcoal making or in the use of biomass fuel (e.g. inefficient jikos) does contribute to losses in energy. Cutting down trees for charcoal and building poles threatened all acacia, alea and terminalia species with extinction. Recent statistics indicate that 759 households in Marsabit Central depend on charcoal for livelihood and about 416 bags of charcoal bags are sold in Marsabit town daily. Sixty three per cent of the urban population in Marsabit Central uses firewood.

In Marsabit County, many older people say that there has been tremendous change in climate since their childhood days especially on and around Mt. Marsabit. Drought is getting worse in Marsabit to dangerous extremes. The damage to the water reservoir is already felt and the poor are already suffering severe social and economic repercussions. Concerns were also raised regarding the availability of fresh water which has diminished due to climate change and deforestation. Water resources have also been affected as many springs that previously flowed from the forest are drying up. Prolonged and recurrent drought has led to reduced forage, degradation of the environment and an increase in destitution.

KORR

Internal Threats

Lack of women participation in decision making

Indigenous women from Korr do not participate in community decision making meetings since they are not represented in the traditional council of elders due to patriarchal culture. Lack of participation means that their views on environment conservation is ignored, yet they hold ecological knowledge.

Overgrazing

The community keeps huge livestock herds that puts pressure on the landscape.

External Threats

Sand harvesting

There is rampant uncontrolled sand harvesting which has degraded the landscape and destroyed shrubs and grasslands . This has led to loss of grass species unique t the landscape. During rainy season this causes soil erosion and excavations poses danger to children and adults when the pits are left open.

Loss of biodiversity

Loss of biodiversity in some parts of Kargi has been caused by infrastructure developments personnel that cut trees and clear land for wind projects and access roads.

Immigrants

There has been influx of peoples from other regions due to favorable climate in Kargi , that cause pressure on the lands and resources. This is migrants who come from other regions during drought periods settle in community lands for longer periods and use environmental resources unsustainably.

Recommendations

- (i) Awareness creation on environmental challenges and possible interventions for behavior change and attitude towards environment. This can be done through the public community forums
- (ii) Empowerment of women groups through support to access decision making platforms so they can share their views in community public forums.
- (iii) Training of community members on the different laws and regulations on environment and the constitution so they can better protect their rights.
- (iv) Strengthening of partnerships of indigenous peoples with local and national NGO's so they can better advocate for community environmental issues
- (v) Dialogue with local and county leadership on environmental issues and planning so that resources can be allocated for indigenous peoples priorities

KARGI

Internal Threats

Deforestation

There is deforestation and there are now few acacia and shrubs in the landscape due to demand for charcoal and fuel wood by urban centres.

Poor waste management

The use of plastic bags and lack of sanitation facilities at community level and small urban centres has resulted in polythene bags choking trees. Currently Kenya has the ban on single use polythene bags, but the clean up of the waste already in the environment is still existent.

Weak environmental committees

The environmental committees that is tasked with ensuring environmental integrity is upheld by enforcing environmental regulations and address environmental issues has been compromised and does not do its work for addressing poor waste management, sand harvesting etc

Overgrazing

The households have huge livestock herds that put pressure on the few available resources. There is also dust pollution and soil erosion from the degraded lands since huge livestock herds make the soil loose.

External Threats

Climate change

Kargi experiences variation in climate change and impacts freshwater access. This results in women being forced to travel long distance to get water for domestic use, wasting valuable time that they could use to engage in other economic activities and decision making processes.

Dumping of toxic waste

Over the past two decades the community had companies dump toxic waste on their lands after mining exploratory activities. This toxic waste has poisoned some community wells. Community advocacy on the issue resulted in government lab testing but results were never released. The wells remain unused making access to fresh water a challenge.

The toxic waste also left salt like formations which are harmful to human health and livestock.

Sand harvesting

Sand harvesting by construction companies constructing roads and other infrastructure is not regulated and has caused a lot of environmental degradation.

Recommendations

- (i) Awareness creation on through the public community forums on climate change and its impacts and on the importance of environmental conservation
- (ii) Empowerment of women groups through support to access decision making platforms so they can share their views in community public forums.
- (iii) Development of community protocols to control access and use of resources and benefit sharing arrangements.
- (iv) Strengthening of the community environmental committee with community leaders and advocates to ensure better protection of environment and peoples rights to health environment
- (v) Dialogue with local and county leadership on environmental issues so they can support the creation of county by laws on sand harvesting etc

LOGLOGO

Internal Threats

Deforestation

Demand for house construction materials, wood fuel and charcoal for income and household use had put pressure on the acacia trees causing its depletion.

Poor waste management

The use of plastic bags and lack of sanitation facilities at community level and small urban centres has resulted in polythene bags chocking trees

Weak community institutions

Weakened community institutions and leaders with poor governance structure means environmental governance and community complains on environment are not addressed

External Threats

Sand harvesting

Access to sand and other building materials not governed, leading to overexploitation and land is left bare and soil erosion during rainy seasons has damaged the landscape. This areas are not rehabilitated after extractive activities.

Invasive alien species

Pastoralism involves migration and hence mathenge (proposis julifora) spread easily and has killed local grass species that was protecting lands from soil erosion.

Wild fires

Over past years the lands due to hot weather has experienced wild fire that affects grasslands. There is no measure in place to manage the fires.

Poaching

Marsabit forest which the community depend on and is habitat to wildlife has had illegal hunting and poaching

Climate change

The community experience prolonged drought due to absence of rain for over 4 years resulting in scarcity of water, vegetation reduce and wildlife and livestock die. Human wildlife conflict is also experienced during drought periods.

Indigenous women environmental defenders

Indigenous women advocating against extractive industries activities in Loglogo face threats from companies and other local leadership.

Recommendations

- (i) Strengthening community environment watch and instituting community protocols for conservation of environment
- (ii) Strong advocacy on companies undertaking extractive activities without proper environmental rehabilitation plans and benefit sharing arrangements with community
- (iii) Mapping the landscape and resources and developing communal management plans e.g water resource management plans
- (iv) Development of community protocols to control access and use of resources by companies and benefit sharing arrangements

KAMBOYE

Internal Threats

Borehole constructions

Several boreholes have been sunk in Kamboye to address water access. This resulted in influx of more people around the area resulting in water contamination and drying up of springs that replenished the old wells.

Soil erosion and air pollution

Degradation of the environment makes lands susceptible to soil erosion and air pollution from the dust

Poor waste management

Poor management of polythene bags waste on landscape that pollutes the environment.

External Threats

Deforestation

Migration of people from other village to Kamboye has resulted in deforestation in small community forest.

Climate change

Lack of rainfall for more than two years has caused persistent drought resulting in loss of biodiversity and impacted livelihood since community are dependent on the natural resources.

Invasive alien species

Presence of mathenge(*Prosopis juliflora*) in the landscape is threatening the natural species and invading water sources.

Recommendations

- (i) Awareness creation on through the public community forums on the importance of environmental conservation and management of waste
- (ii) Empowerment of women groups through exchange visits and leadership training for women
- (iii) Support to manage the invasive alien species in water sources
- (iv) Advocacy targeted at county government to provide insurance during drought periods

Preliminary Conclusions and Recommendations: Marsabit

The members of the Loglogo, Kamboye, Kargi and Korr communities noted the importance of halting deforestation through raising awareness raising on importance of conservation and sharing information on sustainable use practises and to advocate for behavior change at community level and amongst outsiders to improve environment health and wellbeing.

The community proposed solutions to address external threats were:

- To strengthen engagement with local leadership and county leadership in developing new by-laws to address issue of extractive industries, partnering with like minded civil society organizations for advocacy and trainings on existing conservation and or environmental laws.

To address internal threats:

- Development of community laws to govern use of resources. The community laws could learn from the Samburu community protocol to articulate community-determined values, procedures, and priorities to guide their engagement with external actors such as governments, companies etc and regulate their interactions within and between communities and with the territories and areas upon which they depend .Natural justice .org
- Formation of community environmental committees to strengthen community role in conservation. This initiatives will be supported by conducting capacity building workshops and utilizing local barazas 'public foras' to mobilise the whole community and ownership of the process. Women groups to lobby/ advocate for environmental issues, climate change

Preliminary recommendations included more advocacy to be supported targeting local leaders (chiefs, elders, members of parliament and county assemblies)and County Government of Marsabit environment authorities and to strengthen the role of women in conservation. Creation of women networks for local conservation planning and advocacy groups for environmental issues at local and county level and linkage with national level advocacy networks shall strengthen conservation.

There is need to explore alternatives sources of energy , some of the alternatives may include Biogas using livestock and household waste, and tapping of solar energy. Other opportunities include improvement in the charcoal production stages, e.g use of improved charcoal making kilns as 88% of biomass is wasted during production and/or certification of charcoal e.g. Makaazingira Eco-charcoal where charcoal is produced from invasive or weedy plants or other sustainable sources. Efficient use of produce charcoal through use of improve jikos go a long way in reducing demand for bioenergy thus slowing down tree cutting. This will help curb deforestation.

Testimony

I'm happy for the CCRI. As a community that is keen on conservation, the CCRI has helped us understand more on issues we couldn't have on our own. It has reminded us of the past, the challenges of the present day situation and now we can better plan to restore our conservation practiced and strengthen our resilience. We are committed to continue our traditional conservation practice.

Sankau Ole Ntokoyuan, Kimintete Village.

I'm happy about the CCRI assessment because it is helpful to us. As indigenous women, we have been playing a crucial role in conservation and hold traditional knowledge relevant for present day challenges and for future generations.

Alice Hawo Lesepe, Loglogo, Marsabit

WAY FORWARD - THE FUTURE OF CCRI IN KENYA

Indigenous Information Network (IIN) as the facilitating organization, notes the of the CCRI processes and the need to continue collaboration with community members from Marsabit and TransMara and other stakeholders. IIN intends to undertake further initiative to map other stakeholders that can support community conservation resilience in the project area as well as engage with the county leadership.

IIN and the CCRI participants shall disseminate the findings and recommendations to partners and local authorities.

The CCRI participants are in community groups and associations that will continue to strengthen their engagement in conservation decision making and advocating for community rights and role in conservation.

References

A Angwenyi: *An overview of the Environmental Management and Co-ordination*

Act in CO Okidi et al (eds) *Environmental governance in Kenya: Implementing the framework law* (2008) 143.

African Perspectives. Art. KENYA: The Legendary Maasai Indigenous Forest. June 23, 2011

KENYA: The Legendary Maasai Indigenous Forest

<https://afriperspectives.com/2011/06/21/kenya-the-legendary-masai-indigenous-forest/>

Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA). County Fact Sheet; Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) 2013

<http://www.crakenya.org/county/marsabit/>

GFC (2015). *Report of the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative*. Global Forest Coalition. 2 November 2015.

<http://globalforestcoalition.org/exciting-news-from-the-community-conservation-resilience-initiative-ccri/>

Kenya Forest Service
<http://www.kfs.org/>

Kenya Law Organization
<http://www.kenyalaw.org/>

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics Quarterly Report 2017
<https://www.knbs.or.ke>

Marsabit County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017 (revised)
http://www.ke.undp.org/content/kenya/en/home/library/democratic_governance/Marsabit-Revised-CIDP.html