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INSTITUTE OF ANTHROPOLOGY, GENDER AND
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WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES: THE CASE OF LAND IN
KEUMBU DIVISION, KISII CENTRAL DISTRICT

BY

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DECLARATION

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Moses Araka Nyakiongora, who has encouraged me to take up academic advancement and has supported me throughout my study; and my father Mark Omwenga Somoni, and my mother, Rudia Nyamboba Omwenga who have been my pillars of support.

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ABSTRACT

This study set out to examine the gender perspectives of land use and management in Keumbu Division of Kisii District, Kenya. It specifically investigated into the interplay between male-female relations and land ownership, decisions on land use, stratification of domestic responsibilities, and the gender equality promotion policy frameworks as they bear on the functioning of land use and management in the area. The data required for this study was both quantitative and qualitative in nature, and was obtained through administration of semi-structured questionnaires to 45 people, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The respondents to the questionnaire were residents of Keumbu area and were selected by simple random sampling method, participants in the focus group discussions were members of this community with homogeneous characteristics and the in-depth interviews were done with the administrative and agricultural government officials in the study area.

The quantitative data was cleaned and analyzed with the aid of computer SPSS for windows and qualitative data obtained from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions analyzed thematically in line with the procedures laid down under the grounded theory. The analysis has established that the participation of men and women in land use and management in Keumbu is largely tied to patriarchal ideologies as they impinge on the socio-economic and cultural life forms of this community, with women appearing to be distinctively disadvantaged in terms of land ownership and influence on decisions about land use, financial capacity and

performance of domestic chores relative to men. The study has also established that awareness about and enforcement of the existing wide range of international and national policy frameworks on gender equality in the management of productive resources like land is extremely low in Keumbu. In view of these findings, it is concluded that acquiring gender equality in land use and management in Keumbu is a matter largely at primary stages.

To reverse this condition, suggestions for action are made to the research community, policy makers and to the people of Keumbu themselves. The research community is herein invited to accord this subject greater attention and rigour with a view to inform the direction of the inherent policies and actions. The policy makers are called upon to be more vigorous in enforcement of the existing international and national gender equality promotion commitments or formulate new ones that can better address the current appalling depth of gender disparity in use and management of land. For the people of Keumbu, it is recommended that they take a much more proactive approach to the search for gender equality in the use and management of land in their midst by lobbying and advocating for appropriate policy legislation and implementation as well as inculcating attitudes, values and practices that are favourable to both women and men.

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background information

Being agrarian, livelihoods in most African economies are land dependent. The concerns over land in African therefore have to do with the problem of land degradation, soil pollution, land distribution, access, control and propensity to benefit from it.

Land tenure and security including rights relating to land use, transfer, inclusion and exclusion represents complex dynamics with profound implication for social, economic and political progress for African continent and its future at different substrata and segments of this economies and society. (Waswa et al.2002:23). An analysis of land by the institute of economic affairs revealed that women in most parts of Africa have limited access to land and even when they do so, they neither have any rights over such land or control over the produce from the same land. Yet women are majority of primary producers of food and cash crops in these economies, (institute of Economic affairs,1998:07). Currently, women's access to land has become more fragile from politicization and or commercialization of agrarian social/relations which give them access to land and other natural resources.

Further, the marginalization of women especially in the areas of land management, decision making, assignment of domestic chores and family labour and access to household income for land proceeds is bound to translate into irresponsible land uses, more land degradation and higher poverty levels.

There is need to formulate policy framework, measures, towards sustainable land use in Africa that shall:

- i. Integrate women in the access, control and right to ownership of land;
- ii. Ensure their participation in decision making in the use of land and its proceeds;
- iii. Seek to create alternative means of livelihoods in most rural set up which wholly depends on land for survival;

Generally, women in Africa and elsewhere face numerous cultural, socio-economic and legal challenges in access, control and participation in the management of land resources and environment. These challenges impact on their ability to generate income, participate in decision making, improve their livelihoods and socio-economic status at both household and community levels (Orins, S. 1985:23).

Though women are custodians of household food security in terms of food acquisition, processing, marketing and storage, they have no locus stand; neither customary nor statutory, over access and ownership of land, natural resources and environment, as well as produce from the land. Culturally, women in the African society are assigned many menial drudgeries and chores that culminate in their

subordination to men. Men are assigned honorable or dignified chores, duties and responsibility of family leadership, protection and ownership of land and other resources bequeathed by ancestors. Such patriarchal social organization and relations significantly marginalize, and subject women to laborers, indignity, misery and poverty in many economies of our modern times.

The socio-economic transformations of rural society and economies entail change of attitude, formulation of food policy and legal frameworks, capacity building through sensitization and training and provision of appropriate technology and knowledge to both women and men in the management of land resources and environment. Both women and men are consumers, exploiters and managers of natural resources. However, women are highly dependent on natural resources and environment to access food produce, income, water and fuel in their daily chores in subsistence economy. Monetary economy has forced men to migrate to urban or industrial localities in search of cash and properties to sustain their families back in rural areas. Any degradation of land resources and environment adversely affect women's participation in household chores and socio-economic status and is as well as a recipe for strained social relations. Women remain the most able non-migratory members of rural community for suitable natural resources management; men migrate to urban centres in search of well paying chores.

Women's input in policy formulation and decision making as well as knowledge and experience in land resource management are neither recognized nor quantified in economic terms. Access and ownership of land is the main determinant of socio-economic well being of both rural and urban residents in Kenya. Though women have customary access to agricultural land for food and cash production, rarely do they have customary or statutory legal tenure of land. This undermines women's access to and participation in land resources management for suitable monetary and subsistence economy.

Women's access to fertile land, other natural resources such as fuel, water and food are significantly constrained at macro-economic levels by severe drought, adverse weather or climatic conditions, failed monetary economy, soil infertility and land degradation through pollution and erosion. Intensive labour coupled with limited access to land, forest and water resources force women to engage in harmful practices detrimental to their health, environment and economic opportunities (Davidson; 1993:43). Adequate and appropriate training on land use should be provided by governments through, intensive extension work that are responsive and friendly to women folk in Africa (Waswa et al 2006:32).

However, a considerable gap still exists in concept of women's participation in decision making process and its practices, utilization, access and ownership of land in view of gender relations in Keumbu Division.

Widespread failure on the part of the target groups by donor communities and governments could be attributed to non-involvement of women in acquisition of appropriate technology and knowledge in land resource management.

1.2 Problem statement

Land utilization and management over the years has been under exclusive control and ownership of men. Yet, in Keumbu division, women have traditionally hoed, planted, weeded, harvested, stored and processed cash and subsistence crops for several decades.

Women are responsible for an estimated seventy (70) percent of the total food production in Kenya through their direct involvement or participation in the tilling, farming and or rearing animals on land for the livelihood of the venture household or society. Hence, women have vested interest in land protection and sustainability, yet, their contribution in the economy is often unrecognized and not quantified in tangible economic index on survey (Asenath *et al* 1995:5).

With increasing population pressure in Keumbu division with attendant fragmentation of land, demising agricultural productivity and returns, risk of land degradation and high poverty level in the areas and evident.

Any degradation of land resources and environment may adversely affect women's participation in household's chores and their socio-economic well being. There is

need to tailor human need to proper land resource management for optimal and sustainable socio-economic advancement.

Generally women face numerous cultures, socio-economic and legal challenges in access, control and participation in land resource management. It is not clear how gender relations affect access, control, ownership and participation of women in land resource management and to engender challenges that determine socio-economic well being of women and men in subsistence economy such as of Keumbu division in Kisii, Kenya.

1.3 Study objectives

The overall objective of this study was to examine the participation of women in the management of land resource. The specific objective of the study was :

1. To evaluate the role of women in land resource management at Keumbu Division.
2. To identify the challenges associated with women's participation in land resource management at Keumbu Division.
3. To investigate the effects of land ownership and land tenure on women participation at Keumbu Division.
4. To suggest possible strategies towards improved women participation in land utilization and management at Keumbu Division.

1.4 Hypothesis

In this study, it is hypothesized that lack of women participation in land management at Keumbu, is an area hitherto ignored, unknown and / or not easily recognizable (intrinsic) factors.

1.5 Research questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:-

1. What are the specific roles of women in land management in Keumbu Division?
2. What challenges inhibit women participation in land resource management in Keumbu Division?
3. What are the effects of land ownership and tenure systems on women participation in Keumbu Division?
4. What strategies need to be employed towards improved women participation, land utilization and management in Keumbu Division?

1.6 Theoretical framework

The study investigated access, ownership and participation of women in land resource management within the theoretical framework of equity and transformation. The challenges in participation were looked at from equity and transformation point of view.

- **Equity theory framework**

On grounds of morality and justice, society should adopt equity and equality in decision making, access and control of research with gender relations in mind for sustainable benefits in land resource management. With interpersonal relations on gender issues, relative satisfaction of both women and men is evident in terms of their perception of fairness in distribution of resources. Through distress accruing from individual the perception of reward, equity is restored in socio-economic undertaking with focus of ensuring fair distribution of resources to relation particulars irrespective of gender (UNDP 2001:12).

The measure of equity is a similar ratio of inputs and benefits of each person with the social or gender relation without partners receiving benefits or making contributions in equal quantities but rather on proportion of archives and benefits.

Equity in participation, access and control of land will enhance and empower women in natural resource management in view of their significant labour, managerial skills, knowledge and roles in socio-economic utilization of land resource and environment.

- **Transformation approach**

The present structure of society in terms of gender relations needs to be transformed to ensure a people responsive sustainable development that empowers both women

and men to have full, dignified lives regardless of their social class, entity or religion or nationality.

Women must fully participate in land resource management lest they become marginalized and powerless. Participation of women in land resource management makes this more self reliant, independent, accountable and responsible resulting in healthy gender cohesion and socio-economic development.

Gender issues should be addressed in participation of women and men in land management in the central of division benefits to both of their women participate in land resource management to be recognized and documented through carrying research least negative effect on how development efforts. [World Bank 2006:156].

• **Gender Relations and Perspective**

For sustainable socio-economic growth and advancement; women and men, girls and boys have a significant stake in efficient effective and optimal use of natural resources, land and environment within the bill of rights of the constitution. However, women and children constitute the very poorest of the poor with no access, ownership and tenure to land and natural resources. Yet, throughout the world, survival and socio-economic development have tended to be directly dependent on a productive resource base such as land, capital, labour and entrepreneurship.

However, the right of somebody to influence and control his or her own life and conditions under which they live are viewed and dictated by social and gender relations in the society or community.

The transformation paradigm in land resources management strives at understanding the role and interrelations of women and men in their sustainable utilization and management of land, natural resources and environment for collective development and economic empowerment. Gender perspective approach is promised to help promote sustainable and equitable socio-economic development throughout human society [Asenath et al 1995:4].

1.7 Justification of the study

Women have a profound and pervasive effect on the wellbeing of their families and communities. Therefore, inequities that are detrimental to them i.e. be it to their physical and mental health; income earning ability; education and/or decision making power are also detrimental to the society at large and to the environment (Waswa *et al*, 2006:148). Women's possession of indigenous knowledge of natural resources is an important opportunity usually neglected, local knowledge, tied to their experiences on land utilization and management can play a valuable role in their management efforts, hence reduced and/or elimination of land degradation (FAO, 1986:22). Improving women's participation in land utilization and management in Keumbu division will go hand in hand with improvements in; economic opportunities, overcoming women's poverty and improvement in

education as an essential building block for change. Investing in women pays off in improving environmental conditions (Agarwal, 2001:69).

Kenya's economy is mainly dependent on agriculture, and 90 per cent of the total population lives in the rural areas deriving their livelihood from land. Therefore land is the most important resource in Kenya. Since only 17 percent of Kenya's total land area is suitable for rain fed agriculture. Use of the resource should ensure that it is sustainable so that it can provide to meet the demands of the current and future generation (Cleaver, F 1985:82).

Gender discrimination is one of the factors that constraint sustainable use of land in Kenya reveal that in many of the societies, there are differences in responsibilities, user rights, legal status, division of labour and decision making between men and women and this includes ownership and use of land (GOK 1999:21).

In many African societies, women do not own land and therefore they do not have some user rights, which improve the land and make it sustainable. Such uses include planting of trees in farms, terracing and to reduce soil erosion and planting of cash crops such as tea and coffee. (Power, J 1992:14) report that women manage as much as 74% of Kenya small holding farms as full time managers on behalf of their husbands who are away. This implies that women hold the power to sustainable production of Kenya's land resource. Therefore it is necessary that

barriers that inhibit the women from full control of land be removed so that the resources can provide on a sustainable basis in Keumbu. The rapidly growing population demands more and more on land resource due to its agricultural sector. But without appropriate policy and public awareness, the strain on available resources is likely to degrade the environment further and thus threaten the long term sustainability of the development process.

The degradation of natural resources has impacted negatively on family labour, especially on women who have been forced to undertake tedious duties that cost them more hours in collecting water and fire wood for family use which is women's distinctive roles stretching their working hours further. The degradation of natural resources also impacts negatively in women's health, nutrition and level of education.

1.8 Scope of the study

The study sought to assess the views of land users irrespective of their ownership status with a view of identifying issues relating to gender management on natural resources, more specifically the role that women play in land management at Keumbu Division and the impact of their participation in the family well being and the community. The study was limited to Keumbu Division of Nyanza province. The location was purposively sampled due to its agricultural potentiality and

accessibility. Further, Keumbu is a rural setting where women are actively engaged in agricultural activities. Due to financial constraints, the sample selected was 45

1.9. Limitations of the Study

A study on women participation in land management in rural areas involves very official and sometimes personal perceptions. As such, a small segment of it covers empirical studies in the developing world. This perhaps is because this research is very challenging. The author experienced difficulties in accessing some remote areas in the division. A lot of time was spent establishing close relationships with respondents because of the high degrees of mistrust caused by land succession issues. Financial constraints made it difficult to conduct more than one focussed group discussion for the whole division. This proved very expensive in terms of time and finances. However, the exercise was an uneventful and did not encounter limitations.

1.10. Definition of key terms

Gender – Refers to socially constructed roles of men and women as defined by society. The concept of gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviors of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). Gender roles and expectations are learned. They can change over time and they vary within and between cultures.

Resource- Resources are means and goods of reproduction such as land, non human means of production. Natural resources are naturally occurring substances in their relatively natural form. This can be renewable or non-renewable. For the purpose of this study, natural resources will be used to refer to land (Cloke 1985:16).

Access and control- Women and men have different levels of both access (the opportunity to make use of something) to the resource needed for their work and control (the ability to define its use and impose that definition on others) over those resources (UNDP 2000:20).

Agrawal (2001:69) argues that access to resource gives people capability to build their livelihoods. “Assets” are not only “things” to allow survival, but they are the basis of agents of power to “act”. Access differs from control, in that the later implies a form of ownership or rights to a resource. In this study, access and control are proximate measures of long-term land management.

Land Tenure and ownership – Land tenure refers to the length of time a given household has rights to the use of land and the amount of land each household can control at a given time (Malcolm 1994:33).

Control: Is the ability of use and impose sanctions over use of the resources and/or assets of the community including power to “act” as an agent (power of agency).

Access: Is the opportunity to make use of a resource or asset without necessarily having right to ownership, appropriation, disposal or power to act.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This study examined the impact of gender relations on women's participation in land resource management and environmental management issues as well as the challenges that inhibit or constrain their access, control and active participation within a theoretical framework. The overall impact of gender relations on land resource management and environmental issues are significant to warrant formulation and enactment of land laws and policy frameworks which are gender responsive or sensitive to achieve a sustainable socio-economic development.

The achievement of satisfactory and sustainable economic development and sound environmental policy framework depends on adopting a paradigm shift in gender and social relations from household, through community, national to global levels [Allen et al, 1996:66] The present structure of society needs a transformation approach or paradigm that will not only ensure sustainable socio-economic development but also empower both women and men to live full and dignified lives without missing and treachery regardless of their social class, race, religion, authority or nationality [Allen et al 1996:66].

Studies elsewhere have shown that development projects have acted directly against the interests of women in Keumbu Division, Kisii district and that women's role in land resource and development needed to be acknowledged. That ignoring women's role and participation have many ripple effects on other development efforts [World Bank; 2006:53].

2.2 Women Participation in Land Management

The use of participatory approaches to plan and manage land, ecosystems, water and conservation-based interventions is now well established. Few projects in natural resource management today, is funded unless it contains substantial components of women participation in planning, design and implementation (Allen, 1996:54). This is especially true in rural development where participatory approaches form the entry point for understanding local community and their construction of local reality, with the view of tailoring interventions, which have greatest possibility of acceptance (FAO, 1995:11). However, despite the increasing numbers of participatory initiatives in different parts of the world, there is little consensus to what this concept of community participation means.

According to Swanepoel (1993:48), participation is an elusive concept that defies definition. Women participation can have different meanings in different places and circumstances. He argues that human society consists of individuals and institutions- grouping of people with some common characteristics, circumstances

or goals and with certain organization. Existence of shared norms and values is a critical criterion of community formation and hence participation (Mulwa, 2006: 65). As such, a community would share a common bond, be it geographical, social or occupational among others. With this backdrop of an understanding, women participation can conveniently be understood to imply the active involvement in development and natural resource management of the rural people, particularly disadvantaged groups that form the mass of the rural population at Keumbu which have been excluded from the development process (FAO, 1986:22).

Women participation is a concept that has been popularized in community development since 1970's (Mulwa, 2006:69). Women's' participation should be viewed as an action that is stimulated by their thinking and deliberation which they can effectively influence (UNDP, 2007:56). Women participation is therefore more than an instrument of implementing government projects. According to (Muturi 2003:214), it should be viewed as a development approach, which recognizes the need to involve disadvantaged segments of the rural community in design and implementation of policies concerning their well-being.

The importance of women participation in natural resource management has also been highlighted by (UNDP 2006:87) emphasizing that a participatory approach, including the involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), is crucial to any strategy to succeed. This concept of participation should be understood to entail

the empowerment of people, which is, enabling men and women to take control of their destinies. This is captured by Oakley and Marsden (1984:45) who perceived promotion of women participation as entailing the distribution of power; for it is power which enables groups to determine which need and whose needs will be met through the distribution of resources. Women participation as such entails the process of building up peoples' capacity to influence those in authority in determining public policy (Mulwa, 2006:53). Empowerment also implies building up peoples' capacity to take active responsibility over their own decisions and the consequences of those decisions.

According to Eade and Williams (1995:94), empowerment entails a measure of women's capacity to bring about change, whether this is modest or far-reaching in its impact. It involves enabling individuals and groups to develop enough courage and confidence to challenge and overcome oppression and injustice. Chambers (1993:56) argues that decentralization and empowerment enable rural women to exploit the diverse complexities of their own conditions and to adapt to rapid change as they generate their own innovations, find their own solutions, and determine their own pathways.

White (1994:88) suggests that community organization is critical to enhancing women participation in integrated land management at Keumbu, Kenya. A close conceptual and operational link exists between women's participation and

formation of community-based organizations in an area (FAO, 2002:94). Active participation of rural communities in land management can only be brought about through local community and membership-based organizations and other grassroots organizations, whose primary aim is the pursuit of their member's social or economic objectives (UNDP, 2004:24). Community-based organizations (CBOs) and grassroots organizations are voluntary, autonomous and democratically controlled institutions which easily participate in collaborative initiatives effectively. Clearly the facilitators and inhibitors to women participation in land management need to be identified in order to understand the conditions under which women participation can be enhanced to guarantee sustainable land management.

2.3 Hindrances to Women Participation in Land Management

According to Muturi (2003:34), weak governance systems, increasing population, deepening poverty, high illiteracy levels and breakdown of the traditional social structures are often the underlying causes of the low levels of women participation in land management at Keūmbu. A survey of the status of the land and other associated natural resources in Keumbu by UNEP indicated that both had deteriorated significantly over the previous decade (Rodgers 2001:76).

Destructive activities include deforestation, sedimentation from run off, and physical damage of the forests from commercial uses i.e. charcoal burning (DEC, 2000:56). This state continues to worsen although there are laws and regulations set

by the government to regulate utilization of land and natural resources (FAO, 2000:49). Also, the people who depend on these resources are seeing deterioration in their living standards (WMS, 2001:16). Hamisi (2004:67) linked this situation to the adoption of centralized management regimes by the government. Centralized government regimes (which represent intolerance to land management) suffer from a lack of adequate resources. They often tend to ignore local knowledge and capacity and they seldom allocate the financial resources needed for research, public awareness community consultation and effective land management (Mikkelson, C. 2005:30).

Muturi (2001:44) observed that local community in Keumbu are driven by multiple institutional and individual interests, the force of developing markets and changing technologies, and the needs and interactions of varied constituencies within the community. As such one can conclude that, social and environmental problems in Keumbu, as in most communities, are complex and deep-rooted.

According to UNDP (2001:24) the local community and women in the study area have not been committed to sustainable land management pegging so much on donor funding to solve their problems. As such, the greatest challenge to women participation in land management is perhaps human-related factors and a lack of agreed upon methodology for evaluating the success or failure of participation processes.

Heavy dependence on natural resources for survival in Keumbu causes over-exploitation of land, water and forest resources by women, hence triggering a vicious spiral of hunger, poverty and suffering. Labour intensive clearing of virgin forest limits women's access and control to natural resources in situations or audits of land and environmental degradation.

Several factors have been identified or isolated as challenges to active participation of women as agents of positive change in land management, amongst which include:

Poverty, low level of education, non participation in extension work, technology, rights are challenges in participation of women in land resource management.

- **Education**

Women have derived access to education and training in appropriate technology on the basis of being considered a passive factor in socio-economic and technology transformation. Education and training in appropriate technology have in past empowered only men with new shuts in agriculture. Deliberate steps to empower women in land utilization and resource management has engendered better economic growth in nature.

- **Extension work**

In Kenya women face major challenges to access control of land and technology so as to increase efficiency in agricultural operation. Women are systematic exclusion from agricultural extension services and education yet they are the back bone of our agricultural economy. Such discrimination in extension services and education significantly reduces women opportunities for accessing and adopting appropriate technology.

Contrary, a transformation approach would be more realistic in revamping the procedure of these communities (Muthoka M. 1998:34).

- **Women's rights**

Cultural norm, attitudes and practices still constitute real hindrance to women rights to access, control and participate in land resources management. (GOK 1998:11). Through formulation of policy women work and roles in agriculture hence been documented and highlighted.

- **Women and land management**

In rural communities of Kenya, women are invisible and influential managers of natural resources through their direct dependence on land, water, forests for subsistence and economic expansion and through in-depth and immense knowledge of management of natural resources. In spite of unrecognized and devalued role and participation, women have vested interest in land use resources and

environmental issues, gender relations and social relations have always undermined women's interest, access ownership and participating in land resource management since early 19th century.

- **Access and control of land tenure**

Globally, women's right to access and control of public foods is fundamental to improve of their own situation and to the empowerment for effective development at individual committee and nations levels.

However, women's situations have literally worsened in matters of democracy and human rights including rights to legal access and control over resources such as land. Although women have customary access to agricultural land for food and cash crops production, rarely do they have legal tenure, customary or statutory over land. Access and ownership of land is the main determinant for social economic well being of both rural and urban residents in Kenya. To the rural poor, mostly women and children, ownership of any tiny piece of land or just access and participation to such a piece of land is a matter of death and survival (World Bank, 1996:33).

Further, women's access to fertile land, fuel, water and food within their environment may be significantly contained by danger, soil degradation, failed ministry economy, inflation and famine at micro-economic levels. Limited access to

land, forests and water resource may force women to practice what may be adverse to their health, education and economic opportunities. [Okoth-Ogendo 1991:32].

2.4 Land Tenure and Land Management in Kenya

The relationship between land and land users, particularly ownership, access and use of the land resource determines the extent of tapping on the products and/or benefits from them, as well as the peoples' propensity to invest in land improvement on a sustainable basis. In the Kenyan context, the legal interpretation of land tenure (the bundle of rights and duties to land which are held by individuals, groups, or institutions in society, that regulate the use and control of land emphasis on ownership, which presents a major problem because of the difficulties to identify the appropriate owner (Reve T. 1992:45).

Three main designations for land and hence land tenure systems are distinguished in Kenya: government land, trust land, and private land and hence government (public) land tenure, customary (communal, traditional) land tenure, and private land tenure (tilting) respectively (Pander, 1995:104).The legal interpretations of land tenure together with the principles of land law and conveyance are beyond the scope of this study. A critical analysis of this has been done by among others (GOK 1999:21).

- **Public/ Government Land Tenure**

Under government land tenure, the land Act (Cap 280) vests all government land on the government. The president individually or by proxy has power to make grants or dispositions of any estates, interests, or rights in or over un-alienated government land. If utilized well, public land tenure system can go a long way in the conservation of bio-diversity, catchment areas, public utility areas and easing of the landlessness problem. However, in the absence of accountability and integrity, such powers are normally misused and have been known to promote inequality in accessibility to land, destruction of natural forests and catchment areas in Kenya and hence skewed development patterns and differential poverty (IEA, 1998:42).

- **Traditional/ Communal/ Customary Land Tenure**

Traditional or customary land tenure is prevalent on trust land, (land without official title deed).Before it is sub-divided into individual holdings under the land adjudication Act (Cap 284), it remains under the custody of the County Council, held in trust for the local people.

About 78% of Kenya's land mass fall in this category with grazing as the main economic activity. Land is collectively owned by the society, whose members have access to it under well-defined community and family by-laws. Arguments in favour of communal land tenure on the premise of its flexibility and responsiveness to changing economic conditions, falls short of the realities of population pressure,

changing economic systems, and the irreversible traditional to modernity transformation. Communal tenure thrives only on the availability of vast resources, scarcity of which would inevitably lead to its gradual dissolution and replacement with individualized tenure (Ferguson, A.E 1992:47).

- **Private Land Tenure/ Land Tilting**

Private land tenure is applied on all land, which is held by private persons and is registered under the Registered Land Act (Cap300).Private land tenure system in Kenya is based on European and Arab settlement during the colonial period. The objectives of the colonial government were to secure titles to ensure those settlers who had arrived would stay.

Thus, tilting brought with it problems because it demanded residence on and permanent use of the land as a condition of ownership. As an aspect of agrarian law, granting of titles vests legal ownership and tapping of all benefits accrued from the land (sales, leases, mortgages etc) to individuals and at the absolute discretion of the proprietor.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Characteristics of Study Area

Keumbu Division is one of the five divisions in Kisii Central District, Nyanza Province, Kenya. The area covered by the division is 192Km² and lies in accessible, highly agricultural potential zone. Also, the study area has a high population density whereby half of that population is women who are fully and actively involved in agricultural activities.

i) **Climate**

Climatic condition variations in the division are attributed to western highlands. The rains occur almost throughout the year, with the long rains starting from March to June, while the short rains occur from October to November/ December. The mean annual rainfall is approximated at 1200mm, peaking in May and October (Gatabaki, 2000:23).

ii) **Land-use and Agro-ecology**

A land-use classification study (UNEP/FAO/PAP/CDA, 1999) indicated that only 48.2% of the total land area in Keumbu Division is under residential settlements. The main economic activity carried out on land is agriculture (both crop and animal agriculture). The result of this scenario is myriad environmental problems such as

sedimentation, degradation and pollution on land. Most of the agricultural activities in the division occur in the upper part of Keumbu.

iii) Demography

According to the 1999 Population and Housing Census (GOK, 1999:21) the population of Keumbu Division stood at 249,861 persons distributed in the divisions. Keumbu Division recorded a population increase of 63% from 1989 to 1999 to stand at 249,861 persons (GOK, 1999:32). The high increase in population is attributed to natural growth and in-migration, mostly of the labour force from other parts of the country. As such the community at Keumbu is expected to be heterogeneous.

3.2. Research Design

A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for this study in order to assess women participation in land management. This was a case study in Keumbu division, which is selected because of its high population of women and its inherent high land degradation and high poverty levels.

3.3 Sampling Procedures

Because of the nature of this study (diagnostic), and the study population (heterogeneous), stratified random sampling was adopted in getting the sample. Stratified random sampling was employed because it gives each respondent equal

chance of falling in the sample and hence minimizing biases. The sample was representative. Being a survey, there were three groups of respondents from whom data was collected, namely;

The key target population groups:

- i. Local Women
- ii. Community members
- iii. Key informants

i. Local Women

• Socio-economic Characteristic of Respondents

The analysis revealed a remarkable variation of respondents in terms of their level of education, occupation and land ownership. As shown in table 4.2, a vast majority of respondents had at least secondary educational attainment (73.3%), followed distantly by the “primary complete” group who constituted 13.3 percent while those who had incomplete primary level educational attainment were only 4 (9.0%).

The rest of the respondents (4.4%) never had any formal education at all. This skewed distribution of respondents with regard to their educational levels in favour of secondary schooling presupposes that the people reached to for information about the study attributes were and had the intellectual potential to

examine and report accurately on matters of gender relations on land use management in Keumbu Division.

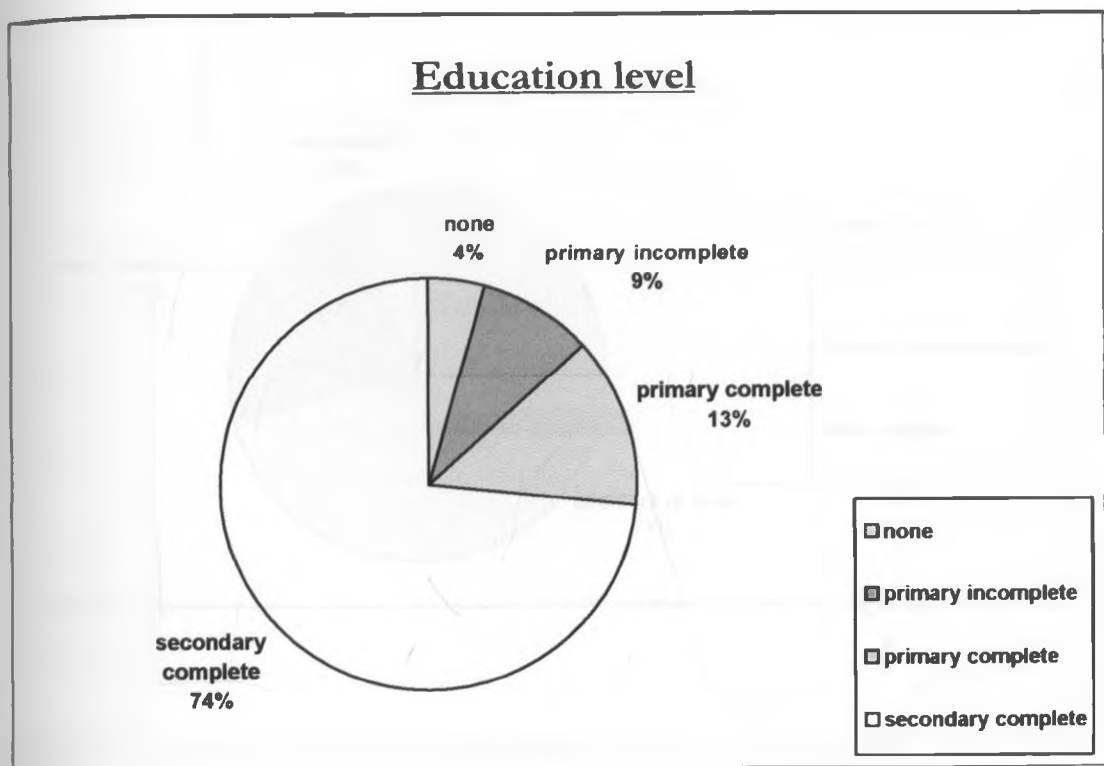


Figure 3.1: Distributions of Respondents by Educational Attainment

All the respondents had some piece of land on which they could practice farming, either in “own” right or by lease system. As table 4.1.3 shows, most of them had one or less acre of land (71.1%). Those who had more than one acre of land were only 10 respondents (22.2%). The 3 other respondents (6.7%) did not respond to the question on this attribute.

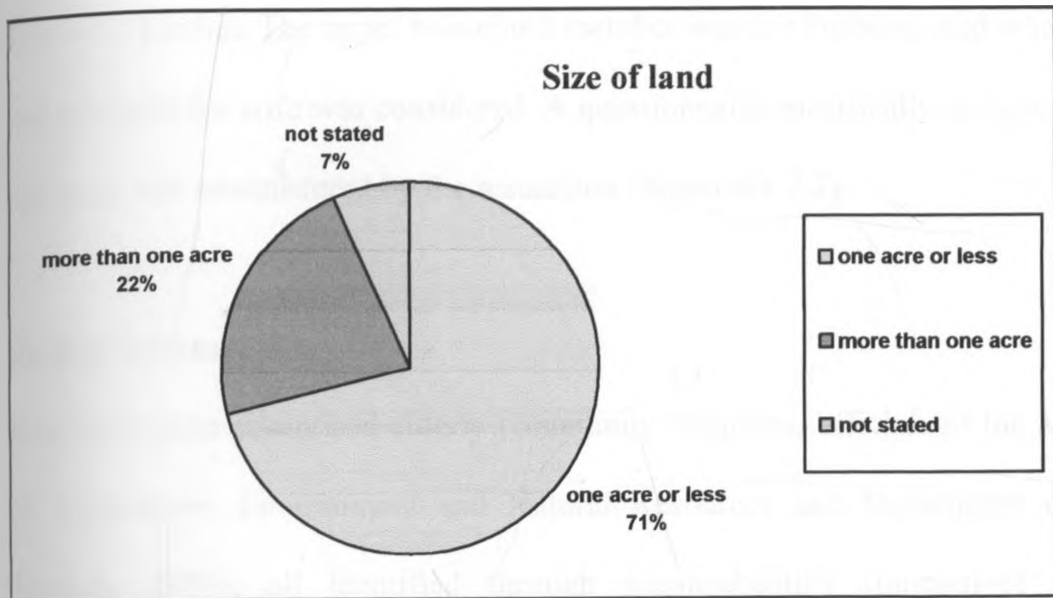


Figure 3.2: Distribution of respondents by size of their land

Slightly over half, 23 out of the 45 respondents (51.1%), reported that they had leased land besides their own pieces of land and most of them (69.6%) that they had hired land for a period of at least two years at the time of the study.

ii. Community Members (Households)

The Kisii tribe are the local inhabitants of Keumbu division. However, there are many in-migrants from upcountry in search of employment in the farms in the area.

For purposes of this study twenty five households (25) were selected randomly from each of the locations with the assistance of the area chiefs. The total number of community members (households) was 100 persons. These were perceived to consist of heterogeneous households with respect to gender, age, sex, educational level and kinship. The target household member was the husband, and when he was not available his wife was considered. A questionnaire specifically designed for this category was administered by the researcher (Appendix 7.2).

iii. Key informants

Key informants comprised elderly community members, officials of the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources and Department of Social Services (DSS), all identified through non-probability (purposive) sampling techniques including snow balling. These were selected on the basis of experience, professional expertise and long stay in the area. They are also involved directly or indirectly in land management and other environmental issues in Keumbu.

3.4. Sample Size

The sample size in this study was 45 women all of them selected from the study area. This was arrived at by randomly sampling women from the community members. This sample size was satisfactory for this study since the researcher could conveniently run either a regression or a correlation analysis, whichever was

applicable. Since the human population at Keumbu is densely populated, this sample was considered representative.

3.5. Data Collection Methods

(i). Questionnaire Surveys

Questionnaires (Appendix 7.1) were administered to respondents from the sampled local women and community members. Answers and responses were solicited for covering the following broad areas:

- House socio-economic information and extent of general environmental awareness.
- Women participation in Land management (existence, nature, modus operandi, and effects thereof).
- Community perceptions and attitudes to Women participation and Land management.
- The relationship between Women participation and land ownership.
- The relationship factors influencing women participation in land management.

Questionnaire method was adopted for data collection in this study because they are easier to administer, follow, provides stimulus to all the subjects and the respondent is not influenced by the researcher.

(ii). Focused Group Discussions (FGD)

A Focused Group Discussion was conducted for each of the locations in Keumbu to determine women participation, land ownership, community views and attitudes on land management. These FGDs also serve as tools to verify data collected by other methods particularly individual interviews. Each FGD session was done on a different day and it involved only participants from the location in question. The focussed group discussions were used in data collection because unlike other individual approaches, they eliminate fears and timidity. This ensures that data which cannot be collected by other methods was collected. The data obtained was used to validate data collected by other methods.

iii). Secondary Data

Additional data for this work was obtained from secondary sources of institutions that have worked in this area for a long time such as; documentation of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of Rome (FAO), United Nations Environmental Programme, Ministry of Agriculture, Catholic Diocese, existing NGOs and Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. Other sources include national development plans, internet and consultancy reports.

3.6. Data Management and Analysis

Collected data was cleaned, coded and summarised into working themes in line with study objectives. Data obtained from interviews and questionnaires was subjected to descriptive statistics focussing on measurements of central tendencies and frequency distributions. The summarized data from questionnaires was keyed in the appropriate spreadsheets. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel are the two computer packages adopted in data analysis in this study. The nature of this study (diagnostic) was limited data analysis to qualitative, descriptive analysis and determination of correlation coefficients(r) of selected variables that are perceived to influence women participation in land management. Results obtained will be presented using standard procedures like graphics and tables.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Roles and Activities Undertaken by Women at Keumbu

There was high diversity of activities undertaken by the women in the study area. As many as 75% of all the women at Keumbu division are involved in environment-related issues. There is a fairly strong interest in soil and water conservation (85%) and agro forestry (90%) (Figure 4.1). This may be due to the strong relationship between community well-being and agriculture. On the other extreme, there is a strong preference for financial empowerment efforts (75%) and farming (80%) in the area. This was attributed to the agrarian nature of the local community economy. Effective agricultural land management and community financial empowerment has potential of reducing household poverty and consequent benefits to the environment.

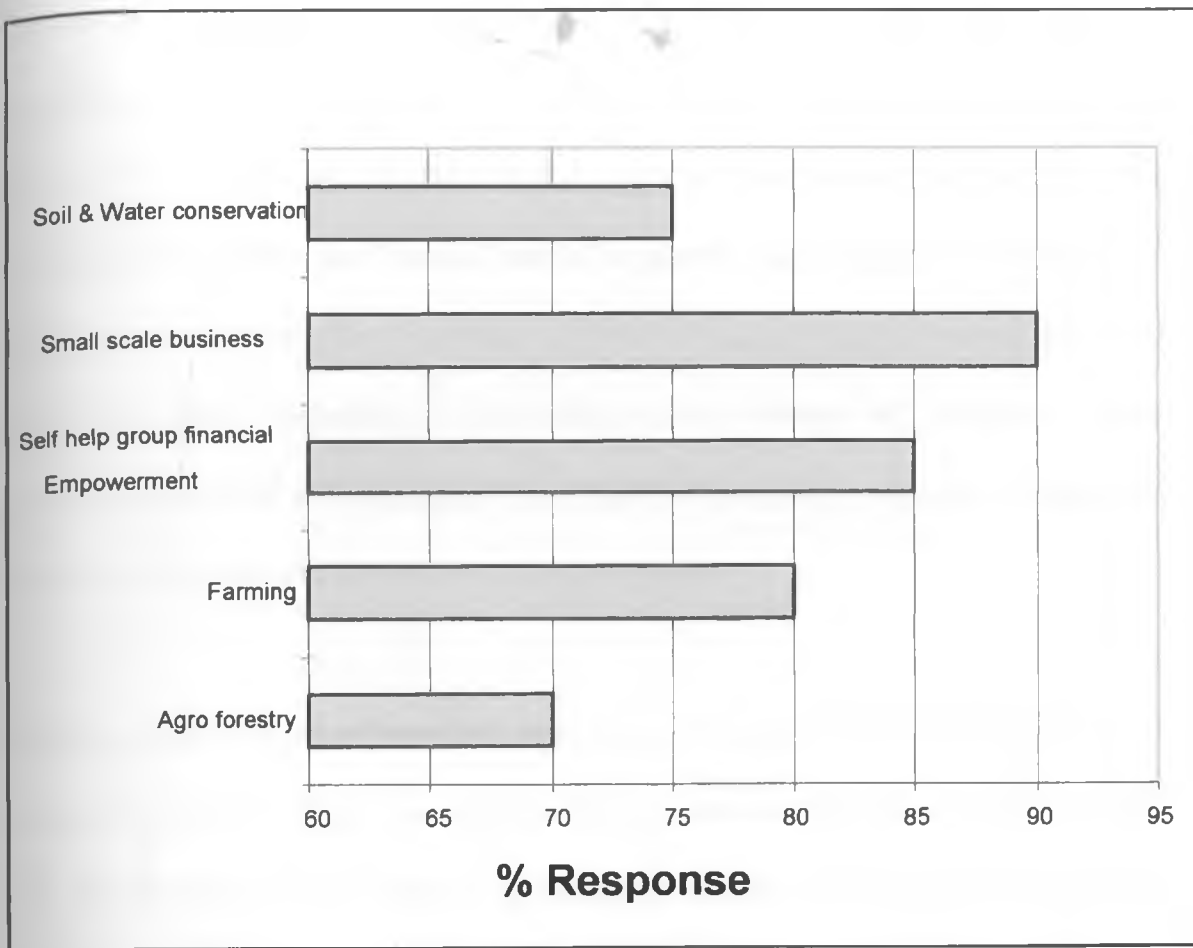


Figure 4.1: Relative importance of activities/roles of women at Keumbu Division

Between 80% and 90% of the women involved in environmental issues classified the women at Keumbu Division as having diversity in age, education, wealth level and kinship. Even amongst the women groups, all of them except one has regularly scheduled meetings for general members, and 90% of executive committees meet regularly (Figure 4.2). In terms of decision-making, ordinary members discuss and decide upon most major issues in almost all of the civil society organizations.

This study showed that women who have formal education appreciated the importance of land management and supported it. On the other hand age differences influenced involvement and support for land management in the sense that, women of same age bracket easily supported and engaged in similar land management activities than when age difference is big. Further, women involved themselves more frequently in collective action because of obligatory social concerns and general absenteeism of their male counterparts, majority of whom had moved to urban areas in such of formal employment.

However, maximisation of benefits in this area is limited by the lack of joint efforts among both genders. More than (85%) of the interviewed women rated the level of their effectiveness in land resource management as high. Women groups expressed that their level of participation in land management was low (15%) while the youth (women) said they were not participating as women were. There are a myriad of reasons attributed to this situation as will be seen later on factors inhibiting women participation in this work. "

Majority of the respondents (66%) rated the performance (measured in, terms of achieving their objectives and expectations of the host community) of women in land management as either low or very low (Figure 4.4).

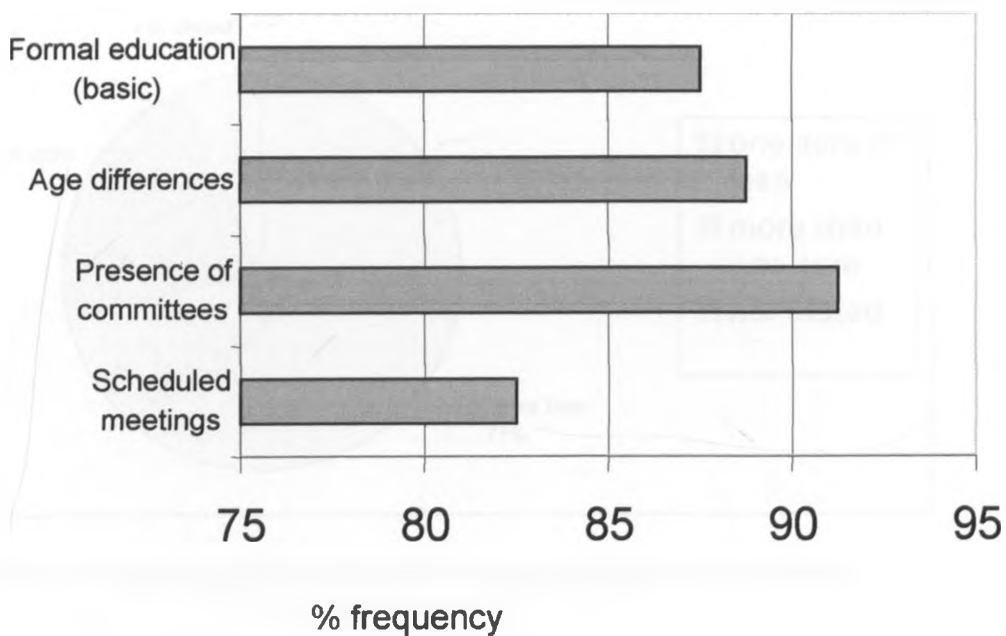


Figure 4:2: Features of Women/ Women Groups at Keumbu

This was attributed to among others, the failure by all stakeholders (government, local organizations, men, NGOs) to accept and operationalize women participation for enhanced environmental management and poverty alleviation.

All the respondents had some piece of land on which they were practicing farming, either in “own” right or by lease system. Most of the women in this division had one or less than an acre of land (71.1%). Those who had more than one acre of land were only 10 respondents (22.2%). (Figure 4.2)

Distribution of land

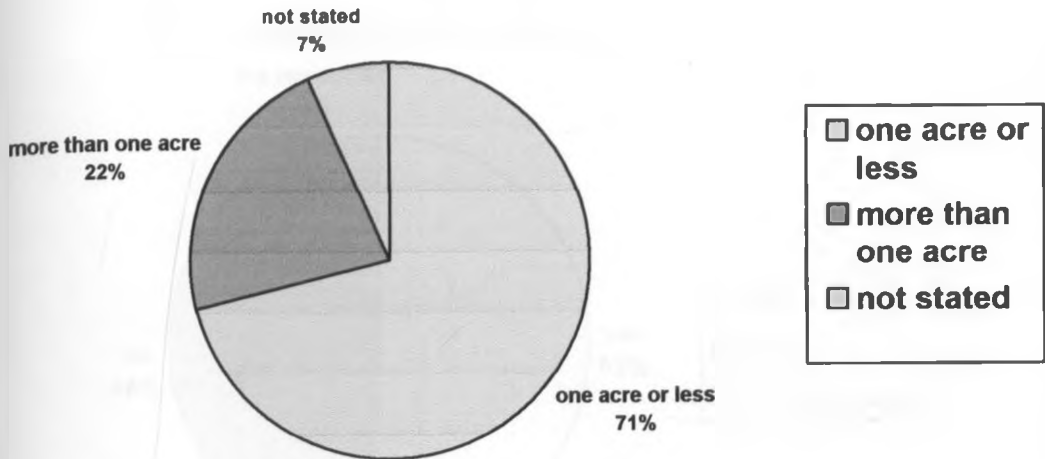


Figure 4.3: Distribution and Utilization of Land Resource at Keumbu

This study revealed that slightly over half, 23 out of the 45 respondents (51.1%), had leased land besides their own pieces of land (Figure 4.3) and most of them (69.6%) had hired land for a period of at least two years at the time of the study.

Respondents who have leased land

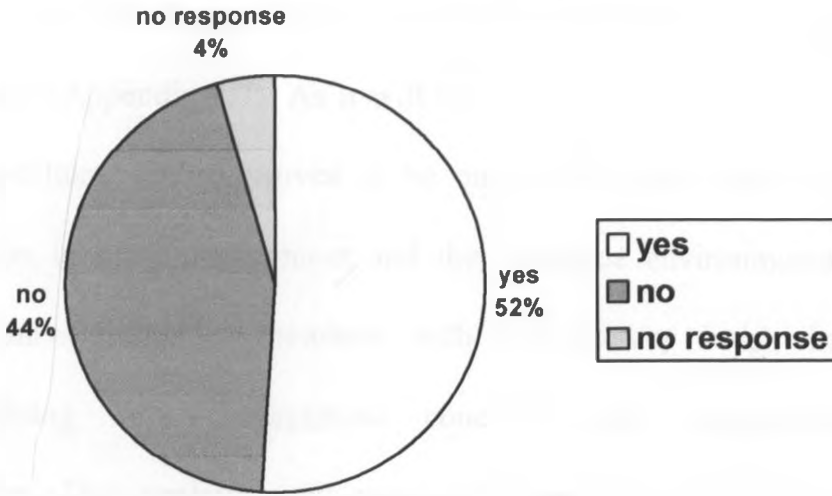


Figure 4.4: Distribution of respondents by possession of leased land

84.4% respondents did not engage in off-farm income generating activity. Those who responded in the negative were only 15.6 percent. Results from the interviewed community members, women and the focused group discussions (FGD) showed that rural communities' attitudes on women participation on land management vary greatly. Up to 85% of the respondents supported women participation if they would benefit from it. This agrees with the widely viewed notion that projects for community development tend to succeed when stakeholders are guaranteed short-term tangible benefits (UNDP, 2000:20).

Positive relationship between presence of gullies ($r = 0.24$, 99%), literacy levels ($r = 0.27$, 99%) and community support for women participation ($r = 0.22$, 99%) was inductive of the influence of human factors on women participation in land management (Appendix 7.7). As it will be seen later in this work, illiteracy, legal and socio-cultural factors proved to be one of the key factors limiting women participation in land management and they enhance environmental degradation. Women and Community members with low literacy levels had difficulties conceptualising land management concepts and operationalizing women participation. This explains why areas with low literacy levels had the lowest support for women participation. More to this they experience higher degradation levels. This finding agrees with the findings of a study conducted at Maluku islands in which White, (1994:23) found a strong relationship between levels of illiteracy and destruction of the environment.

Since community perceptions and opinions on women participation and their role in land management are influenced by changing variables, such as (level of education), it can be inferred from this study that women participation has to take a form which is dynamic and active, in order to enable land management to be adjusted as the economic, social, political and environmental perceptions change within the community.

The study also delved into the influence of division of domestic roles between men and women in the household on the magnitude of their time input in land use and management. The daily activity with which one is commonly occupied was used as a proxy of measuring this attribute and the results were as indicated in figure 4.2.5. As shown therein, nearly twice the proportion of women (51.6%) as that of men (21.4%) divulged that they intensely engaged in farming. Similarly put, a vast number of male respondents (78.65) disclosed that they mostly engaged in non-farming activities compared to only 9.7% of the female respondents.



Figure 4.5: Responses on main daily activity by gender

Responses to the question which specifically sought to enlist the average amount of time spent by respondents in farming related work (figure 4.2.6) also confirmed the existence of this gender disparity in time spent in land use and management, to the degree the proportion of male respondents who reported spending more than six hours a day in the farm was only 25.6% compared to 77.4% corresponding proportion of female respondents.

4.2 Key Characteristics of Women Participation

Based on the four focused group discussions and a synthesis of data from questionnaires, four dimensions of a women participation based on Keumbu were distinguished: coverage, mode, form and motive (Figure 4.6). All the community members and 81% of the women respondents interviewed claimed that there must be a motivation, the geographical coverage of women participation, mode and the form women participation will take. The first dimension of women participation is coverage, which refers to the extensiveness of participation in terms of its functional competencies and geographical area.

In simple participation women confined their shared activities to single land management themes, such as agro-forestry. Geographically, small women groups limited their activities to their villages, whereas large ones and NGOs had their programmes and activities scattered all over the division. Form, as second dimension of women participation, shows a number of degrees of development.

The least developed form is the one in which parties in a participation agree on methods of operation, which are to their mutual benefit but their financial independence is maintained.

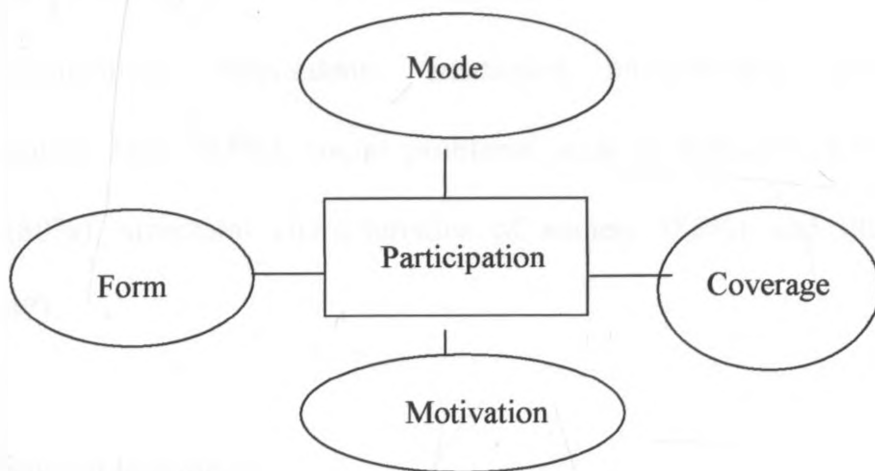


Figure 4.6: Characteristics of Women Participation in Land Management

The mode describes the intrinsic nature of the relationship among the women. Pre-conceived stereotypes of the other party can inhibit the development of joint problem-solving initiatives and active women participation. Team building to gain shared values facilitates the effectiveness of women participation.

Motive on the other hand, refer to the underlying reason for participation. These include the desire to internalise the zone competencies of other women, achieving economies of scale and intelligence gathering, the joint development of new facilities and making a stronger case for the acquisition of resources. This agrees

with the findings of (Reve, 1992:45) who identified participation to have four features; mode, form coverage and motive.

4.3. Challenges to Women Participation in Land Management at Keumbu

When asked what the major factors are that lead to failure of women participation in land management; respondents mentioned unfavourable policies (80%), discriminatory laws (84%), social problems such as attitudes (83%) norms and beliefs (80%), structural characteristics of society (88%) and illiteracy (91%) (Figure 47).

(i) Unfavourable policies

Many of the underlying inhibitors to women participation are related to issues of governance and intra-policy differences and weaknesses. There are often deeply entrenched policy and institutional barriers at local, national and international levels that work against the interests of the women and the poor communities. 80% of women respondents indicated that failure by the government to formulate and implement policies that encourages women to participate, greatly hindered women participation while hostile staff, corruption and failure to uphold the law were serious hindrances to women participation (Figure 4.7).

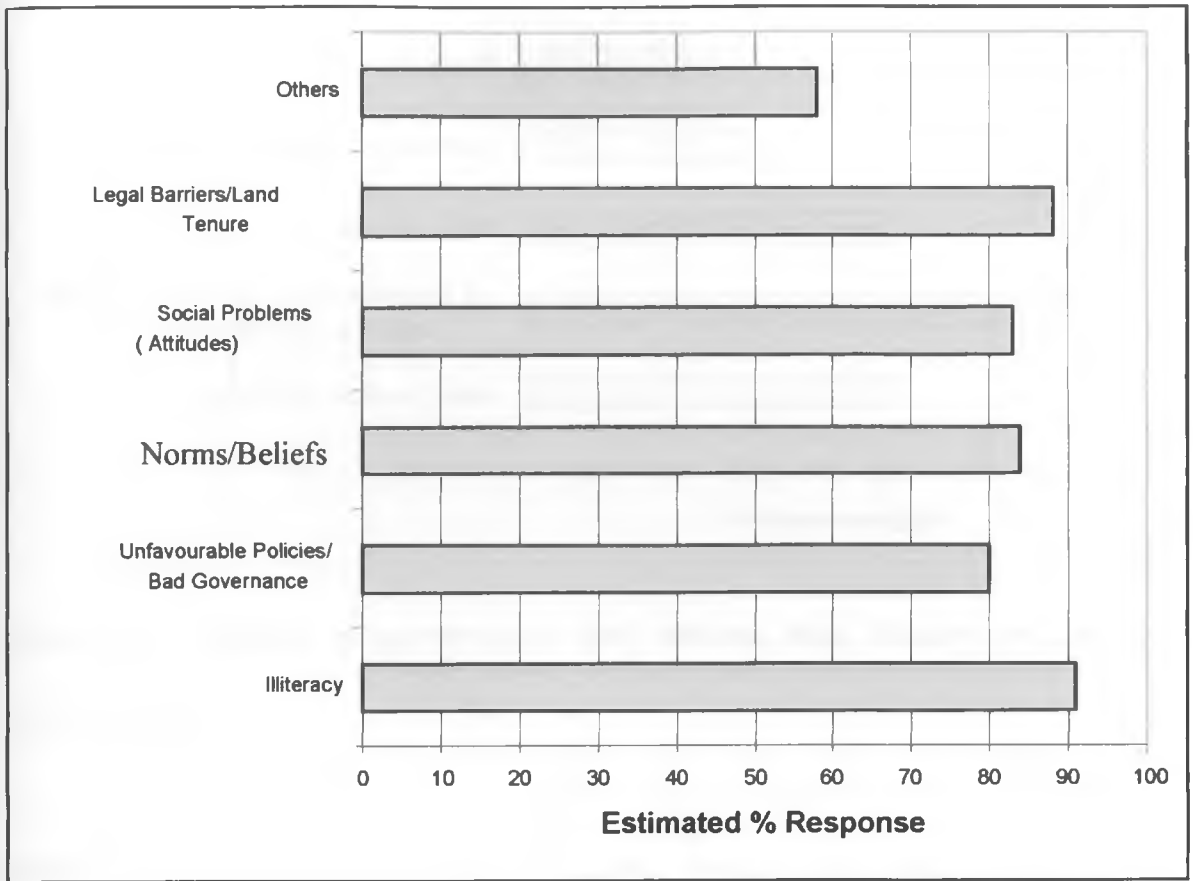


Figure. 4.7: Hindrances to Women Participation in Land Management

Further, bureaucratic systems and hostile government staffs to community members and women were identified as key inhibitors their women participation. Weaknesses in governance and land policies were in particular reported to exacerbate resource tensions and conflicts.

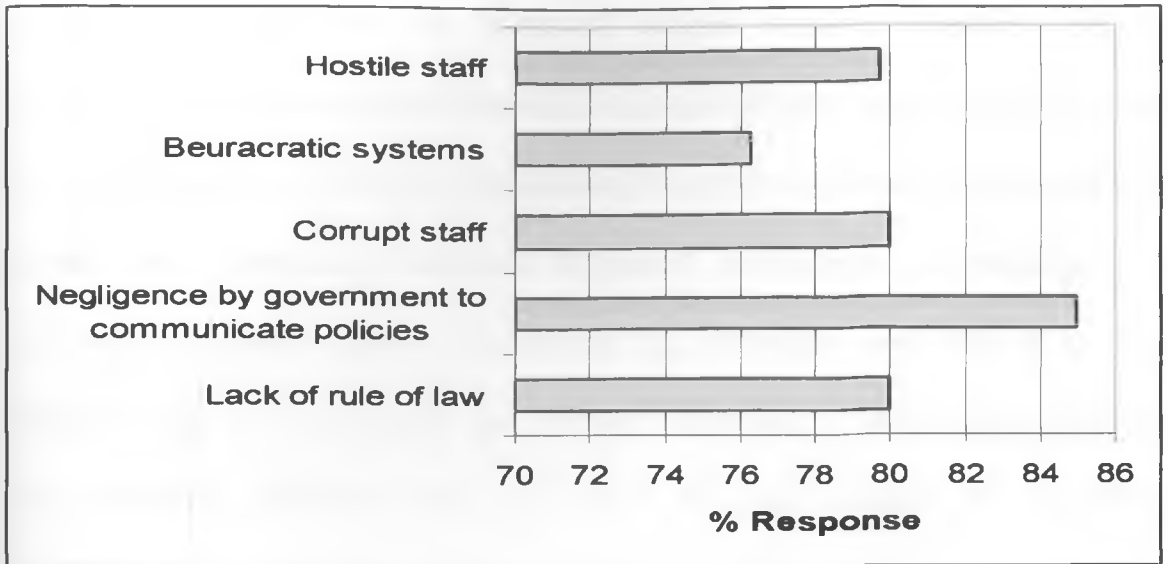


Figure 4.8: Aspects of governance and policies that hinder civil society collaboration.

Women and community members during the focused group discussions (FGD) argued that though burning charcoal is illegal, sale of charcoal is authorized in urban centres thus creating a demand for charcoal in a fragile agro-ecosystem. The 84% of the Women respondents and 66% of the community members complained that government officers use rude language and view them as illiterate and so they don't listen to their views. The women at Keumbu highlighted that some government officers speak to them in English whereas they are not literate to the language. This seriously influenced their non-participation in land resource management.

Lawlessness as portrayed by increased women battling, vandalism by the community youth and charcoal burning in the eyes of government officials hinders institutionalisation of women participation in land management in the area. The women and community members attributed lawlessness to negligence of government security systems, incitement by politicians and lack of a clear framework on how community and women participate in land management and solve emerging conflicts. The government was also accused of not clearly formulating and implementing policies that encourages women participation. These the women argued that it left them in darkness on what they are expected to do in land management.

(ii) Social problems

The social problem dimension was concentrated on two issues; attitude and bad relations. In this study it was evident that 43% of the women respondents interviewed were cynical of the sustainability of women participation in land management. Majority of them distrust the actions and motives of their fellow women (Figure 4.9).

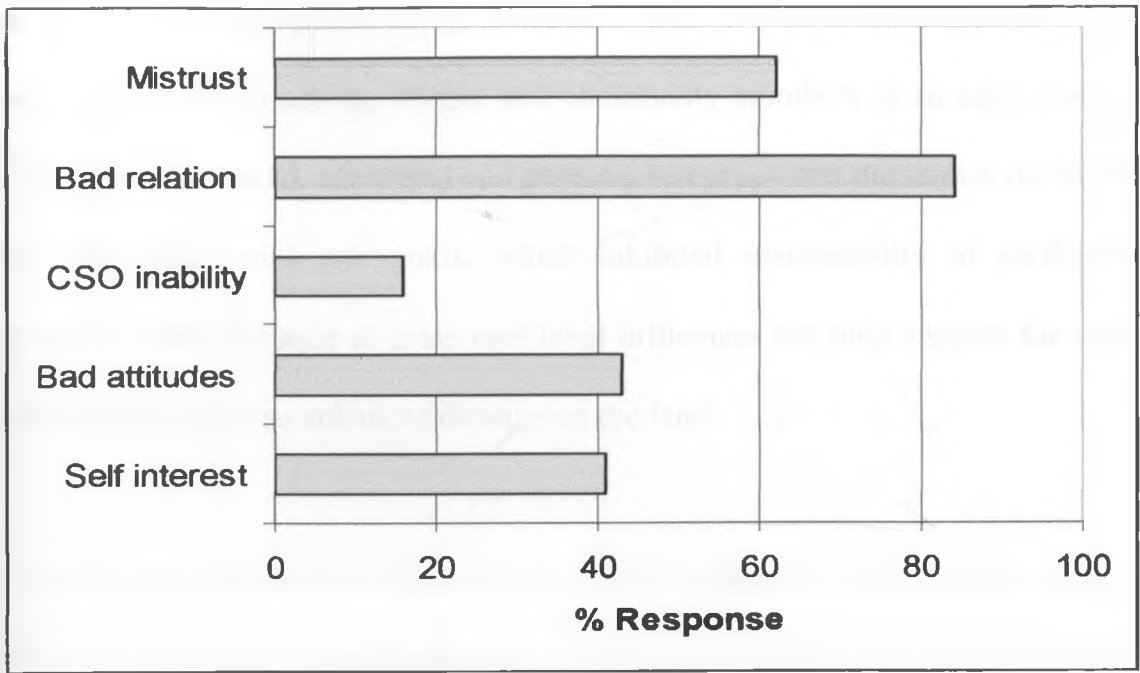


Figure 4.9: Women attitudes to Participation in Land Management

This is complicated by women, who are competing for land resource and the acceptability against each other. Seventy five percent of the respondents from women believed that public officials are not interested in improving the average citizens' quality of life, the quality of the land and hence their observed poor level of participation.

Only 38% of the women respondents trusted the action of the government. This is echoed by the arguments of advocates of social justice that rural areas have been neglected by the government; and government officials in such areas only write nice reports; but practically nothing is being done to enhance human well-being through such measures like women participation. As such, cynicism was rife in Keumbu

among the women, perpetuating a vicious cycle of self-interest in land resource utilization. Cynism among women and community members in an agro-ecosystem with limited financial, analytical and physical resources was the reason for focusing on short term gains and goals, which inhibited sustainability of participatory processes. Such attitude at grass root level influences not only support for women participation but also enhances damage on the land.

The women reported that fellow women do not do things for the common good, are not sincere and they implement most of their programmes for their own benefits. Indeed, lines of inquiry should be moved from the substance of blame/responsibility-type issues to processes that may reduce the abrasive outcome. Here, attitude is an important factor. However, attitudes cannot be suddenly changed for the better through some magic planning formulae. This is because attitudes, such as cynicism, are held in check by basic differences in the structure of authority between the women, Government and the private sectors. Hence the need for the women to embrace the tensions between them positively and through dialogue builds effective participatory systems for enhanced land management and mutual gains. As observed another study, empathy and personal ethics are the key determinants of real development of marginalized people by outsiders.

The Keumbu women and community members accused their politicians of incitement and manipulating of women to maintain their political careers. This has

created a turbulent environment characterized by mutual suspicion, mistrust, perpetuation of the culture of self – interest among the women, thus rendering active participation difficult. However, it is suggested that effective dissemination of information by women to other women, combined with appropriate legal and governance systems, and the eventual imposition of adequate sanctions, can improve the situation.

(iii) Land Tenure and Legal Barriers to Women Participation

Though in possession of survey numbers, land ownership was regarded as private in Keumbu. However, lack of title deeds to land accounted for more than 60% of tenure insecurity. The positive relationship between enjoyment of private rights and use of grass strips, planting of trees and application of farm yard manure was indicative of the potential multiple benefits to be accrued in the long run. Under enforced private property rights, both trees and grass barriers would be protected from the destruction to be expected during off season grazing.

Estimates by the village development committee showed that approximately 75% of males in the productive age had migrated to urban centres in search of off-farm employment. This explained why more than 90% of the family labour was provided by women and children. Apart from reducing the amount of labour available for conservation and land productivity, important decisions on land management would be delayed because of absent household heads. Land resources and production

making was also entirely the domain of men. This denied the women active participation in the decision making processes including access to sufficient farm and off-farm income. The foundation of this kind of marginalisation was traced in the following deep rooted dogmas:

- Only men should work outside the community and wives should not accompany them;
- All domestic work is the domain of women. Men are to do other duties considered heavy;
- Under normal circumstances, men are the bona-fide household heads;

Consequently, women could only make decisions of short term implications, which ruled out decisions governing terrain modifications like terracing, cut off drains and even establishment of certain perennial crops and trees for land management purposes.

(iv). Illiteracy

As many as 90% of the women respondents in this study cited illiteracy in the area to have inhibited women participation in land management. Illiterate women not only find it difficult to understand land management techniques but also are easily manipulated by their husbands. Though many felt that illiteracy inhibited women participation in land management in the area, they were unwilling to take initiatives in solving the problem. According to DSS (2000), 56% of Keumbu residents are illiterate or semi- illiterate. Among this women account for 85%. This is slightly

lower than the findings in this study which rated illiteracy at 59% (based on the interviews with community members and women). As a result, areas of highest illiteracy seem to be generally more underdeveloped.

This supports the findings in a study conducted at Rajasthan, India by (UNDP 2000:20); that the majority of illiterate people are poor and they degrade the land most. In their effort to escape from vicious cycle of poverty, poor household cultivate hill slopes, marginal land and engage in charcoal burning in Keumbu. This not only destroys the environment but also risks their lives in case of disasters such as land slides. Illiterate household had a problem in grasping the objectives and principles of land management quickly. They were also the most vulnerable to manipulation by their husbands.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study has examined the gender perspectives of land use and management in Keumbu Division of Kisii District, Kenya. Specifically, gender issues of ownership and control of land in the study area, the influence of stratification of domestic roles on land use and management, as well as challenges of women in land use, and resource management. The perceptions of the residents about the importance of the role women play in this field in view of policy framework on gender equity and their effectiveness. Quantitative and qualitative data gathered through questionnaires, holding focus group discussions and interviews with research assistants in the study area. The data collected had diverse demographic and socio-economic variables to test objectives and hypothesis of study by both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis tools.

i) Ownership and Control of Land

This study finding is that land ownership and control in Keumbu area is intensely gender skewed in favour of men. This finding agreement with socio-economic surveys elsewhere has indicated that women own only a dismal size of productive resources such as land.

Surprisingly, the study found traditional approach where women and men participated in decision making in land use in their cash and food crops produced in Keumbu. This is a departure from several findings that hold that men are relatively key decision makers on matter of land use and proceeds from land use. This finding can be attributes to high level of education amongst the respondents. Advanced education is likely to translate into favourable gender relations (Rogers, 1978:35), in land use of most of the respondents had at least attained secondary education.

Contrary, the level of consultation between men and women over matters regarding use of proceeds from cash and food crops was found to be rather low. This confirms findings elsewhere that women have little ownership right over the proceeds from the land they have access to, except for food crop produce for domestic use.

The gender relations in subsistence economy is hardly considered as 'productive' the gender relations literature that subsistence economy is hardly considered as 'productive' activity and tends to be associated with women than men. It further confirms the position that women are the main participants in performing most of the household agricultural production yet the patriarchal nature of the society confers upon men ownership and control of income from cash crops in subsistence economy (Hammond, A Estese, 1995:123).

ii) Gender, Domestic Roles, Land Use and Management

An analysis of the influence of gender relations and roles on land use management in Keumbu area showed that more women than men combined household chores with farming activities, and that men spent even less time in farm work than their female counterparts. A profoundly large number of women participation in taking care of children and their husbands besides tilling the land, while men mostly used their off-farm time in social relations or tiding recreational activities.

Also, the analysis indicated that women received more support and help with farm work from children than from their husbands; however, most of the female and respondents affirmed implication that their wives were the major participants in land use practices. This is an indication that the people of Keumbu, like in most parts of the world, are yet to achieve gender parity in the distribution of household roles and income from produce for suitable socio-economic development of both sexes and gender.

Non participation of men in domestic chores is coherent with the findings of a variety of ethnological studies and socio-economic surveys that men are engaged more in non-subsistence economic activities than women, thus confining upon women the onus of access and participation in land resource management and environment in subsistence economy. Most men migrate to urban centres in economic means other than land produce proceeds only.

iii) Challenges Facing Women over Use and Management of Land

The study brought to fore the challenges facing women in land use and land resource management are gender related and occasioned by gender imbalance in the distribution of resources and opportunities for social and economic advancement in favour of men. The main challenge facing women was inadequate financial capacity. By women to access artificial fertilizers, hired farm labour and using modern highly mechanized farming techniques.

Another major hindrance to female participation in this matter included high decision making power allegiance to men, an issue that prominently featured in the female-only focus group discussions wherein a vast number of participants raised the concern that their decision on the type of crop to be grown on the land, for instance, had to be sanctioned beforehand by their husbands. Similarly, quite a number of female participants in focus group discussion sessions remarked that they sometimes had to be late in the application of fertilizers or buying seeds to be planted because their husbands, under whom proceeds of crop sales was in custody, could not release the money for purchases in good time. Other challenges cited were unsupportive husbands and having to strike a balance between farming activities and domestic chores.

All these challenges firmly raise the possibility that Keumbu area is a typical example of a society that is yet to fully shift from the cult of perfecting female subordination.

iv). Perceptions about women's significance in use and management of land

This study investigated into the views and opinions of Keumbu people about the significance of involvement of women in matters of land use and management. An examination of the responses on this attribute revealed that they were massively in affirmative both males and females acknowledged that women were key to the agricultural sector as they performed most of the activities therein relative to their male comrades.

This massive endorsement of the importance of women's participation in land use and management is a pointer to the possibility that the conventional notion that women are second to men in land management has no solid footing in contemporary values and prominently faces rapid deconstruction with advance in time.

vi). Gender Integration Policy Frameworks

Policy frameworks toward gender equality in land use management was appallingly ineffective and their awareness dismal. Both local leaders and the people themselves demonstrated a high degree of unawareness about the documented

policy laws for enforcing gender equality between men and women with respect to land use and its management.

This lack of awareness raises the possibility that lack of any policy framework and laws on land and environment for enforcing gender equity on access, control and participation of women in management of production resources such as land; impact is yet to be truly felt on the ground, particularly by communities in subsistence economies such as that of Keumbu.

5.2. Conclusions

The study concludes that there exists a great deal of gender disparity in the use and management of land in Keumbu Division of Kisii District in terms of ownership and control of land, labour input and decision making on crucial matters of land production.

There is need to formulate good policy framework and land laws for gender relations and equity in land resources management in Kenya that recognizes that women play a significant role in agricultural land use and management in Keumbu, and face a variety of socio-economic and cultural challenges in ownership participation in land and income from the land proceeds.

5.3. Recommendations

In view the aforesaid findings, it is recommended that the question of entrenching gender equality in land use and management affairs of Keumbu area recognizes equity and transformation approaches in gender relations with a policy framework based on bill of rights of the consultation.

i). Towards Effective Policy Environment

Noting that there is a dearth of awareness for enforcement of gender policy instruments in Keumbu area, there is need to increase the vigour of awareness creation with emphasis on existing legal instruments that touch on the dispositions of women on matters of management of productive natural resources such as land. The policy empowerment would influence the attitudes, beliefs and values held by the people of Keumbu to adopt more gender responsive approaches to land use and management practices.

There is need to advocate for formulating and implementation of policies that would effectively address persistent injustices in male-female power relations at household level and transformation of the cultural and institutional outlook of land use and management in the country to a more gender friendly one.

ii). Toward Self-Tailored Gender Equality Initiatives

Noting that the people of Keumbu themselves, particularly the women, are grossly concerned about the atrocities of male-female imbalances pose a crucial threat to the performance of their agricultural economic activities, it suffices to note that they themselves are at the centre of any conceivable proposals for reversing this order. Therefore, they need to be intimately engaged with all actors in this sector as a bid to ascertain that their outcomes animate their intrinsic interests and values.

iii. Recommendation for Research

I subsequently recommend that the design of future studies around this subject should cover the entire Kisii District and embrace naturalistic observation approaches such as participant observation for greater rigour and applicability of the findings herein land in Keumbu division.

Given the limited study scope on ownership and control of land, the influence of domestic roles stratification on male and female participation in land use and management, the challenges before women *vis-à-vis* men with regard to land use and management, perceptions of residents about the significance of women's role in the matter and the prevailing gender equality enhancement policy landscape.

I also recommend that analysis of the phenomenon examined, and investigated in the study be applied with greater insights considering attributes outside the study

scope such as the legal atmosphere to formulate policy framework and laws that may enforce and promote gender equality on matters of land use and management, the place of the state, the market and civil society organizations, including national and international non-governmental organizations supports further longitudinal study of the specific issues examined to form a sound foundation on which to formulate policy framework and land laws in land resources management for effective transformation subsistence economy on gender opportunity.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC IDENTITIES OF RESPONDENTS

1. Name _____
2. Sex _____
3. Age _____
4. Duration of stay in the area _____
5. Level of education _____
6. Marital status _____
7. Number of children _____
8. a. Are you employed? _____ Self employed _____
b. If employed, state occupation _____
c. If Unemployed, what is your source of income? _____

PART B. LAND OWNERSHIP

9. What is the size of the land you occupy? _____
10. Who owns the land? Self _____ Husband _____
Lease _____ (specify) _____

11. If self, do you possess a title deed?

12. a. Apart from the land you own, if any, do you lease land for farming?

b. For how long have you leased the land?

13. Who is the owner of the leased land?

Male _____ Female _____

PART C: PARTICIPATION IN LAND MANAGEMENT

14. a. What crops do you grow on your land?

Food crops _____ Cash crops _____ Both _____

b. What crops do you grow on leased land?

Reason? _____

15. What is the size of the land covered?

Food crops _____ Cash crops _____ Both _____

16. a. How do you spend your day?

b. How many hours do you spend in the farm per day?

17. a. Who assist you in farm work?

Husband

_____ Children _____ Workers _____

18. How do you manager your land?

19. How do you think land can be properly utilized and managed?

In your opinion, do women play any role in land management? Explain

PART D: HINDRANCE IN PARTICIPATION

20. Who decides what is grown on the land?

21. a. What crops are given more prominence land-coverage?

Cash crops? _____ Food crops? _____

b. From cash crops?

Self _____ Husband _____ Both _____

22. Who is in charge of cash crop proceeds?

Self _____ Husband _____ Both _____

23. Who decides how to use the money?

a. From food crops?

Self _____ Husband _____ Both _____

b. From cash crops?

Self _____ Husband _____ Both _____

24. What projects are financed by money from farm activities?

Self _____ Husband _____ Family _____

25. a. What problems do women face in utilizing land resource? _____

b. How can such problems be overcome?

7.7. Summary of Raw Data

Description of collaboration dynamic items	Effective frequency	% Valid Frequency
Objective 1:		
i. Main activity of Women		
Agro forestry	72	90
Soil and water conservation	68	85
Financial empowerment	60	75
Farming	64	80
ii. Nature of Women Participation		
NGO	17	4
CBO	193	48
Women group	112	28
Youth group	81	20
Objective 2:		
i. Farmers are involved in community projects	68	85
ii. Women involvement in land and environmental issues	68	85
	53	66
iii. Women have not achieved objectives in the area	63	80
	52	66
iv. Land degradation perceived as high		
v. People willing to support women participation		
Objective 3:		
i. Women interdependence on each other	60	75
ii. Women participation based on MOU	65	81
iii. Informal participation most popular	50	63
Objective 4:		
i.. Norms and Beliefs	65	84
ii. Illiteracy	73	91
iii. Social issues	64	80
iv. Structural characteristics of Society	69	88
v. Governance and weak policies	64	80
vi. Financial hardships among women	47	58

N=80