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USAID/KENYA AND EAST AFRICA GENDER ANALYSIS FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION STRATEGY 2016–2020

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Project Description: The aim of this project is to develop a gender analysis that examines gender issues affecting regional, cross-border development challenges and that will assist USAID/Kenya East Africa (KEA) in developing its RDCS for 2016-2020. This includes the Mission's Development Objectives (DOs) and Intermediate Results (IRs), and provides specific recommendations that will assist USAID/KEA to take concrete action to address gender gaps and promote gender equality and female empowerment in support of its efforts to enhance East African-led sustainable economic growth and resilience.

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directive Systems
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ART	Anti-retroviral therapy
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
AU	African Union
AU-IBAR	African Union – Intra-African Bureau for Animal Resources
AWEP	African Women’s Entrepreneurship Program
CB-HIPP	Cross-Border Health Integrated Partnerships Project
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CEPPS	Consortium for Election and Political Processes Strengthening
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
EAC	East African Community
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EATIH	East Africa Trade and Investment Hub
FSW	Female sex workers
FtF	Feed the Future
GBV	Gender-based violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information, communication and technology
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa’s Development
MSM	Men having sex with men
NARS	National agricultural research systems
PEPFAR	President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (U.S.)
RDCS	Regional Development Cooperation Strategy
RECs	Regional Economic Communities

ReSAKSS	Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
RIGOs	Regional Intergovernmental Organizations
ROADS	Regional Outreach Addressing AIDS through Development Strategies
SEAD	Social Enterprise Accelerator at Duke
SIMLESA	Sustainable Intensification of Maize-Legume cropping systems for food security in Eastern and Southern Africa
SMP-AH	Standards, methods and procedures in animal health
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, commissioned by USAID Kenya and East Africa, examines the gender dimensions of development within six key sectors across the region (13 countries) —Trade, Agriculture, Environment, Health, Conflict, Governance—as well as the ways in which gender is integrated into the work of regional intergovernmental bodies and development actors. The analysis is based on five domains of gender identified by USAID:

1. Access to and control over assets and resources (including income, employment)
2. Gender roles, responsibilities, and time use
3. Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices
4. Social norms and beliefs
5. Patterns of power and decision-making

Findings across these domains have been synthesized into *General Findings* and *Sector Findings*. Overall and sector-specific recommendations are then made to determine actions that can be taken to help close the identified gender gaps.

Overview of Findings

The analysis reveals that gender roles and norms, and the underlying imbalance of power that shapes them, create substantial differences in how men/boys and women/girls are able to engage in all sectors, limiting the opportunities, health and wellbeing for women and girls as well as their families and communities and hindering more robust development across the region. While some strides have been made in acknowledging gender as an issue, the gendered dimensions of development in all sectors remain largely overlooked or unaddressed in programming. USAID-funded programs are often designed and implemented without gender analyses or gender action plans. This results from a combination of factors including lack of genuine ownership of the issue, limited available technical expertise, limited resources, and shallow analysis.

Across the five domains of gender identified by USAID, the analysis found that:

Women's access to and control over assets and resources (including income, employment) is limited in economic terms as well as in relation to controlling their own health and well-being. Women lack equal access to land and, therefore, capital (for which land can serve as collateral), as well as agricultural inputs. While the laws around land rights have begun to change in the region, they are not being translated into action. Men typically control financial resources; women do not have the same opportunities to work outside of the home or to make financial decisions. Women often have to ask for allowance or seek permission to spend. When they do earn income, they may forfeit their earnings to their partner or male relative. These patterns, in turn, limit women and girls' access to essential services such as healthcare.

Gender roles, responsibilities, and time use are significant determinants of women and men's access to and control over resources, economic empowerment, health, and safety. Women's roles within the household mean that they do not have time for other forms of productive labor, and that most of their time and labor is unpaid (while girls are more likely to be pulled out of school than boys). Women who

earn income perform double or triple roles caring for the household and children while engaging in work such as farming or trade. Gender roles exacerbate conflict (e.g. cattle raids are used as a means of expressing “manhood”), heighten the risk of GBV (e.g. walking long distances to collect water and firewood), and adversely affect health-seeking behaviors of women and men.

East Africa has a number of **laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices** to promote more gender equitable development, e.g. the EAC Gender Strategic Plan, the COMESA Gender Policy, and IGAD’s Regional Strategy for Higher Representation of Women in Decision Making Positions. However, policies are not being translated into practice and while important, have gone largely unimplemented. Institutionally, gender integration remains a challenge because it tends to be donor-driven (ticking a box), and lacking in resources, technical expertise and analysis.

Cultural norms and beliefs across the region promote an imbalance of power between men and women and perpetuate rigid gender roles and responsibilities. This leads to unequal access and outcomes in each of the sectors covered in this report, as well as acceptability of multiple forms of GBV from domestic violence to border harassment to denial of opportunities.

The **patterns of power and decision-making** that underlie all of these gender domains create a critical gender divide. Men maintain power over women in both the private and public spheres, across different sectors. Even when women gain resources, they lack the power to decide how they are used. Women often have to seek permission to travel or to use household income, which negatively impacts their own health as well as that of their families. These power imbalances stifle women’s participation in government, environmental management (e.g. post-disaster reconstruction), formal and informal trade, health, agriculture, etc. and obstruct healthy development in the region.

Overview of Recommendations

This report recommends that USAID prioritize and invest in institutional strengthening around gender. This means recruiting and building technical expertise, allocating funds specifically for gender work, and ensuring that gender analyses are fundamental to programs. Programmatically, it is recommended to support community-led programming and engage both women and men in working towards gender equality. To integrate gender effectively and ethically, programs need to address the underlying power imbalances between men and women. Programs that do not do this, can end up causing more harm in order to meet their different needs in an ethical and safe manner.

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive programming that considers the needs of both women and men, based on reliable gender analysis, is a paramount concern of USAID. Gender plays a major role throughout the East Africa region in a variety of development sectors, and it is a critical factor in designing programs to best serve these communities. Given the diversity of USAID projects, a useful gender analysis must take a multi-sectoral and comprehensive approach to identify best practices and ongoing challenges. This study examined the key issues in trade, agriculture, environment, health, conflict, and governance, as they relate to both gender dynamics and international development goals.

The objective of the gender analysis report is to assist USAID/Kenya East Africa in developing the Regional Development Cooperation Strategy (RDCS) for 2016-2020. USAID defines the East Africa region as including the following countries: Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

GENDER

This report examined gender issues affecting regional, cross-border development challenges in the areas of trade, agriculture, environment, health, conflict and governance. The analysis focused on the regional nature and cross-border implications of identified gender gaps in programming, and makes recommendations for cross-border development interventions. It is based on the gender domains within the Automated Directive Systems (ADS) 201; ADS 205.3.1; and ADS 205.3.3.

Areas of interest included, but were not limited to, the following issues:

- Differences in the status of men and women and their access to assets, resources, opportunities, and services
- The influence of gender roles and norms on the division of time between paid employment, unpaid work, and volunteer activities (including subsistence production and care for family members)
- The influence of gender roles and norms on leadership roles and decision-making; constraints, opportunities, and entry points for narrowing gender gaps and empowering females to assume these roles
- The differential impacts of development policies and programs on males and females
- Possible interventions for narrowing gender gaps and empowering females

Defining Gender

While “sex” refers to universal *biological* characteristics that define males and females according to their reproductive roles, “gender” is defined as the *socially-constructed* differences between males and females, and their differing social roles and relationships.

Gender roles are learned through socialization and vary by culture, context and time. Gender shapes the dynamics of human interaction and is influenced by economics, the distribution of resources, political power, and social spheres.

METHODOLOGY

This gender analysis is informed by both a rigorous literature review and primary data collection, designed to capture gender integration policies, strategies, best practices, and challenges in international development projects throughout East Africa. The literature review covered 35 documents, including official reports from USAID missions, international agencies, regional institutions, and local governments, as well as research studies focused on international development efforts in East African countries. This material was used to develop an evidence map showing sectors, key findings, recommendations, and gender gaps. This secondary research was then supplemented by primary data collection that consisted of semi-structured interviews with USAID/Kenya East Africa mission personnel, other USAID missions in the region, and key stakeholders across East Africa.

A total of 69 interviews were conducted for the analysis, including 13 focus groups, 16 individual interviews, and 10 telephone/Skype interviews. The in-person interviews were conducted during 2½ weeks of field research between December 4 and December 21, in six East African countries: Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia, Djibouti, and Uganda. Interview subjects included personnel from USAID Missions as well as implementing partners, regional intergovernmental organizations (RIGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies, and community-based organizations, among others. Multiple interviews were conducted with personnel from three major regional intergovernmental bodies that exert considerable influence on member states in the region: the InterGovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Djibouti; the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) in Lusaka; and the East African Community (EAC) in Arusha.

There were several challenges and constraints in the development of this regional gender analysis. First, for the field research portion of the project, the field team had approximately 2 ½ weeks to conduct the key informant interviews across multiple East African countries in order for USAID to expeditiously complete its RDCS. This proved to be a significant challenge, especially since the project coincided with the holiday season, when many local mission personnel were unavailable or out of the country. This challenge was addressed by conducting telephone interviews and Skype calls after completion of field research, with those stakeholders who had returned to their offices by the project's end.

Second, not all development sectors and gender issues could be addressed in this report. The analysis focuses on the sectors that are the largest in the East Africa region and that most international organizations and agencies focus on. The gender issues examined are those that were most cited by key informants and that have been addressed in development policies, projects, and programs throughout the region.

GENERAL FINDINGS

OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL GENDER INTEGRATION

The findings of this Kenya and East Africa Gender Analysis show that gender integration is an institutional challenge across the region.

- Key informants from USAID and implementing partners indicated that a number of USAID/East Africa-funded projects have not conducted gender analyses or developed gender action plans.
- Monitoring and evaluation, as well as gender reporting, was flagged as a significant institutional shortcoming in promoting gender integration.
- Many key regional projects do not have personnel with dedicated gender expertise or functions: PEACE III, East Africa Trade and Investment Hub, and CEWARN do not have gender specialists.

Defining Gender Integration

Gender integration seeks to ensure that women, men, girls, and boys are able to meaningfully participate in, contribute to, and benefit from development investments.

Women’s experiences, perspectives and concerns need to be integrated into the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting of policies, programs, and activities across all sectors.

According to key informants across the region, gender integration is still largely driven by donor requirements; where gender integration is not mandatory or explicitly tied to funding, it is largely ignored. In other instances, it is adopted only as a symbolic or box-checking approach. This finding was brought up across sectors, mentioned by key informants from RIGOs, USAID, and USAID regional and mission-based projects. For example, a key informant from the regional Nile Basin Initiative’s Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program (NESCAP) gave this observation: while NESCAP carefully addresses gender in project preparation, developing gender action plans as part of the framework of its projects, governments are ultimately responsible for program implementation, and they often ignore gender recommendations as low priority. The same interviewee indicated that gender action plans were more likely to be adopted and implemented by governments if the donor indicates that gender integration is a priority.

GENDER AND REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Gender policies

East Africa has a number of regional commitments to promote more gender equitable development by institutionalizing principles of gender mainstreaming and integration throughout the region. The East African Community (EAC), the InterGovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) each have policies aimed at gender equality.

- The EAC Gender Strategic Plan addresses issues such as legal frameworks, women’s participation in politics and the economy, and gender-based violence.¹
- COMESA has a gender policy designed to facilitate the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into all policies and structures, to make them gender-responsive and to contribute to sustainable socioeconomic development in the region.²
- IGAD’s gender policy has led to a Regional Strategy for Higher Representation of Women in Decision Making Positions as well as a Regional Action Plan for Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

In IGAD’s gender policy, gender is identified as one of the priority cross-cutting policy themes to be mainstreamed in all IGAD programs and undertakings. In effect, all IGAD programs and projects should address gender equality and women’s empowerment—through design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation—alongside specifically targeted interventions to address critical gender issues in the region within the framework of IGAD’s mandate and service delivery mechanisms.

Although East Africa RIGOs have made a number of regional commitments to mainstreaming gender, there is concern throughout the region that not enough is being done and that policies are not being translated into practice and action. The gender policies and stated objectives of the three main regional entities are commendable and important, but they have largely gone unimplemented. This finding was repeatedly brought up during interviews, including direct interviews with COMESA, IGAD, and EAC representatives as well as USAID Mission personnel. According to an interview with USAID/Uganda, RIGO gender policies lack effective implementation and are more symbolic than substantive in their present form. The 7th African Regional Ministerial Conference on Women in 2004 concluded, “African governments continue to commit to international instruments promoting and protecting women’s rights, but there has been a lack of effective implementation at the national level.” One key informant at the EAC reported that gender is perceived as a social issue at the EAC rather than as a critical, cross-cutting issue that reaches across all sectors. Consequently, many sectors do not have specific guidelines on gender integration.

Table 1: Summary of RIGO Gender Policies

Intergovernmental Organization	Gender Policy or Strategy	Objectives
East African Community (EAC)	EAC Gender Strategic Plan (2011–2015) ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide enabling policy and legislative framework for gender equality and equity • Facilitate gender mainstreaming nationally facilitate gender responsive budgeting • Facilitate collection of sex disaggregated data • Provide enabling mechanisms to address gender-based violence
InterGovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)	IGAD Gender Policy (2004) ^b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming to achieve gender equity and equality goals • Strengthen and secure IGAD institutional framework for upholding equality and equity principles and goals • Mainstream gender into IGAD structures, organs, sectoral programs, and themes • Establish IGAD Gender and Development Indicators that will enhance its regional harmonization and integration processes and goals
Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)	COMESA Gender Policy (2002) ^c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream gender in policy formulation and implementation • Promote meaningful participation of women in regional integration, with an emphasis on trade and development • Eliminate gender inequalities and promote equal access to and control of resources and opportunities • Address cross-cutting socioeconomic issues such as HIV/AIDS and human rights • Promote partnerships with the private sector, civil society, international institutions, and other stakeholders for effective implementation of the gender policy

Sources:

^a 2010. *EAC Strategic Plan for Gender, Youth, Children, Social Protection and Community Development 2011-2015*. Arusha: EAC Secretariat

^b Updating the IGAD Gender Policy, Strategy and Developing an M&E system. IGAD

^c 2002. *COMESA Gender Policy*. Addis Abba: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.

Lack of authority and accountability

RIGOs lack the authority to compel member states to comply with gender policies. For example, the EAC has no action plan to help guide implementation, and its gender strategy does not define how the

EAC should work with countries to support its gender commitments. According to a key informant at COMESA, an assessment of COMESA's gender policy found that the policy was not popular or widely adopted by member states.

In addition, regional organizations lack appropriate gender monitoring and evaluation tools or reporting mechanisms, and consequently gender is seldom assessed in reporting outcomes and impacts. RIGOs can work to hold member countries accountable to developing and implementing gender action plans by creating relevant planning, monitoring, and reporting tools, and including reporting on gender as a standing item within their reporting responsibilities.

Limited Capacity

Many interviewees acknowledged that RIGOs have limited staff capacity and expertise to promote gender integration or to apply gender analysis to key regional issues. IGAD interviewees reported that a gender-related vacancy was empty for a year and a half, contributing to the low level of capacity in the organization. A staffer in IGAD's Conflict Early Warning unit commented that, a few years ago, the gender department at IGAD secretariat was very strong because of strong leadership in charge of gender—but when that person passed away, the overall gender focus reduced markedly. Similarly, a key informant at COMESA described the lack of staff expertise in applying dedicated gender analysis, when examining key regional issues. Funding Challenges

Key informants also noted the lack of targeted gender funding for conducting trainings, seminars, and conferences to promote gender awareness. COMESA personnel noted that, because 85 percent of COMESA's resources come from donors, gender will not be addressed unless donors make it an explicit priority for funding.

CROSS-CUTTING FINDINGS

Addressing gender norms, beliefs, and stereotypes

Even though education was not one of the sectors explicitly examined in the Regional East Africa Gender Analysis, it repeatedly came up as a cross-cutting theme, goal, or strategy across sectors. Specifically, a number of key informants spoke about the role of education in changing deeply rooted gender norms, roles, biases, and stereotypes that influence and shape the regional gender issues highlighted throughout this report. Many of the key regional gender issues discussed here are systemic consequences of norms and beliefs defining the socially accepted (gendered) qualities, life goals, and aspirations for males and females. Thus, investments to address regional gender issues need to integrate educational and transformative approaches that address underlying norms and beliefs.

Women's time constraints

Across East Africa, women face a triple role that entails a great deal of productive, reproductive, and community work; women thus bear the burden of very heavy workloads and limited time to promote agricultural productivity or economic empowerment. Women have less time than men to devote to economic activities, including trade and agriculture, because of “double work days” that revolve around not only economic activities, but also time-consuming household tasks.³ Women's time constraints were cited in both literature review sources and in interviews across sectors, as a major obstacle for women's empowerment in the region.

Women's triple role has serious implications for their ability to meaningfully participate in, contribute to, and benefit from development investments, as women generally have less available time to participate in trainings, workshops, and other economic, leadership, and educational opportunities.

In addition, women's reproductive roles need to be carefully considered when designing interventions. It is important not to disrupt important reproductive and household functions undertaken by women, such as serving as guardians of household nutrition. For example, breastfeeding mothers must be able to continue healthy practices of exclusive breastfeeding, which is important for child health, nutrition, and food security. In addition, Somalia-based research has found that, as mothers gain economic employment — particularly as the family breadwinner — daughters are pulled from school to assist in domestic work. This, in turn, can lead to unintended harmful effects, such as a decline in education and an increase in child marriage.

Men's engagement and risk-mitigation

A significant regional finding across sectors is that many gender programs and activities are focused almost exclusively on women's empowerment, without including men. Programs often do not analyze or address the underlying power dynamics between women and men, which means they are unable to mitigate risks. Both the interviews and the literature review revealed that unintended, harmful consequences often occur as a result, including increases in gender-based violence as well as spouses' co-opting of assets, resources, and benefits intended for women. Interviewees described how men often feel threatened as their wives (or women in their community) adopt new and non-traditional roles, assert increased decision-making capacity, and experience economic, social, and political empowerment. In turn, men sometimes respond to this perceived threat with physical violence or economic violence. For example, key informants from USAID/Uganda pointed to incidents of GBV when a woman starts to earn more money than men in the household. Both the literature and key

Productive work is defined as the production of goods and services for consumption and/or trade.

Women's productive work is often less visible and valued than men's.

Reproductive work refers to care and maintenance of the household and its members. It is critical for human survival, but often overlooked as **not real** “work.”

Community work refers to the quasi-obligatory preparations for social events, ceremonies, and celebrations, as well as community improvement and political activities.

“To promote female empowerment, it is necessary to engage men and boys.

Leaving men out has not facilitated getting to the barriers of gender equality. We need to consider the concept of “Do No Harm” in all programs.”

– USAID/Uganda Mission Interviewee

informants discussed how men often take over women’s roles or their value chains, following an increase in value or productivity, resulting in women’s loss of ownership and control over hard-won gains. Therefore, it is important that programs that aim to empower women also work with the community to transform power imbalances and social norms and mitigate risks.

As women’s empowerment and participation are often hindered by social norms and practices, it is important to engage entire communities through a sensitive community-led process that garners their activism and support. Successes in community mobilization approaches such as *SASA!* in Uganda, show that there is value in engaging whole communities—including both women and men—to transform gender social norms. While it is sometimes necessary to employ different strategies for reaching men and women, using an approach that involves and recognizes the value of all community members, helps to build a critical mass and break down the norms that are upheld by both women and men in the community.

Gender-based violence

GBV was reported as a key regional issue across all sectors examined. Although it is hard to capture accurate statistics, due to inadequate research and gaps in reporting, existing data show that GBV is pervasive throughout the region, with intimate partner violence the most prevalent form. Fully 56 percent of women in Tanzania and 71 percent of women in Ethiopia experience physical or sexual violence (or both) inflicted by an intimate partner⁴ while studies show similarly alarming statistics in other parts of the region.⁵

GBV is rooted in an imbalance of power between men and women. It is a widespread problem throughout the region that prevents women, girls, and whole communities from reaching their full potential. GBV leads to a range of negative outcomes, not only for women but also for their families and communities. On an individual level, GBV erodes the physical and mental well-being of women, girls, and their families, preventing them from reaching their full potential. On a community level, the impacts of GBV can be felt across all sectors, significantly hindering development and growth. For example, the health consequences of GBV not only affect survivors but also create a burden on the healthcare system. GBV prevents economic growth by limiting women’s opportunities and perpetuating harmful gender norms that curtail more dynamic, efficient, and equitable economic solutions. GBV—and the imbalance of power that perpetuates it—limits agricultural productivity, trade, and the ability to manage environmental shocks. Responsibility for GBV prevention and response cuts across all sectors, where power imbalances manifest in different ways. Rather than being viewed as a gender problem, it should be viewed as a development issue that deeply affects communities throughout East Africa and the region as a whole. Understanding and addressing the root cause of GBV is fundamental to quality programming that meets the needs of both women and men.

Defining Gender-Based Violence

The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) defines GBV as: “Any act...that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”

Physical, sexual, and psychological forms of violence include: rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence, traditional practices that are harmful to women, marital rape, early or forced marriage, and sexual exploitation.

Within the region, the risk factors for and impact of GBV exist are layered across sectors and contexts. Conflict in the region heightens women and girls' vulnerability to GBV as violence is used as a strategy of war, opportunistic sexual violence increases due to the breakdown of social systems and protections, and limited resources leave women vulnerable to exploitation and violence. At the same time, GBV continues to fuel the HIV crisis, with GBV featuring prominently as both a cause and consequence of HIV. While there has been some progress on laws and policies to address GBV, for example the 2010 Domestic Violence Act in Uganda and the 1999 Inheritance and Succession Law and 2008 Law on Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence in Rwanda. However, enforcement of laws has been limited and customary practices and social norms that favor men's power over women outweigh legal norms.

SECTOR FINDINGS

TRADE

Summary

Women play an important role in regional trade in East Africa—mostly in the informal sector, where they face specific constraints and challenges. Women typically have fewer trade opportunities than men and, as traders, they face different obstacles in the informal and formal trade economy. In Kenya, for example, where 85 percent of regional trade occurs, a 2014 study found that Kenyan women continue to be disadvantaged traders.⁶ The most common regional trade constraints for women include:

- Lack of informed policies and structures that take into consideration the differing needs and potential of women and men
- High cost of transportation
- Limited access to finance and land (as collateral)
- Stigmatization as women in a male-dominated field
- Limited access to markets, due to lack of security and mobility
- Risk of GBV related to increased economic empowerment in the context of ongoing power imbalance in the household
- Limited education and access to training

Gender Spotlight

Women are integral to regional trade, but the vast majority of women's trade takes place within the informal economy.

Opportunities in both the formal and informal sectors are significantly hindered by gender norms that give men more power than women. Addressing the gender dimensions of trade is essential to building an efficient and thriving trade economy within the region.

The analysis found that, while some efforts have been made to understand the gender dimensions of trade, this tends to be seen more as a way of “ticking a donor box” than as a critical component of effective, fair, and ethical trade within the region.

Findings

Women in formal trade

Gender roles restrict the opportunities for women to engage equally in the formal trade sector. Women in the formal trade sector thus face significant challenges as a result of policies and practices that uphold unequal gender norms. Women are typically employed as laborers in the handicraft trades (stone carving, baskets, tailoring, and wood carvings), in businesses generally owned by men. In the apparel sector, too, the vast majority of women work as employees rather than as managers or business owners. According to the Eastern Africa Investment and Trade Hub, which implements some African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) activities, there are very few women exporters. Female exporters indeed are generally looked down upon or criticized for providing lower quality finished products.

Women in informal trade

Informal trade is still prevalent throughout the region, with women making up a significant number of informal traders. Recent research indicates that women represent 74 percent of informal traders across the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi.⁷

Women often prefer informal trading, with greater flexibility in negotiating customs and tax rates.

Small trade. A study commissioned by the East Africa Community and the Economic Commission for Africa in 2009 showed that women shy away from formal trade systems because of fear of excessive taxation, tariffs, harassment by border and security officials, and bribes. Women report that they are made to pay for services from their trade capital—as either a bribe or an unfair tariff. Much of women’s trade is therefore small enough to be carried as personal effects and not be declared or taxed. One exception to this trend is livestock, an area of regional trade in which women have played a fairly active role, according to interviews with representatives of the African Union’s Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources/Nairobi. In general, women trade in small animals, although a handful of women are breaking barriers and trading in larger livestock such as cows and camels. One woman trades camels in Somalia, exporting up to 1,000 camels a season to Ethiopia.

Limited access to capital. Women informal traders have limited access to capital. Without owning land to serve as collateral, women traders generally cannot borrow from banks. As a result, women traders often use personal savings to start their businesses, or they borrow from family members or from informal money lenders. These factors also contribute to women remaining in the informal sector, with limited ability to expand or diversify their business.

Informal cross-border trade (ICBT). Cross-border trade (CBT) plays an important role in poverty reduction by providing trading opportunities for women, mostly in informal cross-border trade. In Rwanda, women represent around 64 percent of the traders involved in exports through ICBT. (Exports account for more than 80 percent of total ICBT in Rwanda.)

Challenges for women in ICBT. The biggest constraint faced by women in informal cross-border trade, affecting 70 percent of them, is lack of adequate funds to support businesses. Other key

constraints include high taxes (44 percent), high transportation costs (41 percent), high competition from big companies (36 percent), and lack of information on markets (35 percent).⁸ Regional organizations such as EASSI are working to address some of these issues by encouraging women's trade associations, establishing a database of women cross-border traders, and disseminating information about formal trade policies. However, much more work is needed.⁹

Fears and Concerns. According to an EAC 2009 study, informal women cross-border traders share common fears and concerns related to their status as women. In general, women involved in ICBT expressed concerns about: opening up new trade opportunities because of fear that men will take over, especially in Kenya and Uganda (less so in Rwanda or Burundi); unfair taxation, with little confidence in EAC trade protocols; corrupt border officials; and harassment by border officials, specifically along the Ugandan border. They resist formalizing trade practices or joining trade associations for fear that growth would benefit only bigger traders, marginalizing the women who have fewer goods to trade.¹⁰

Access to Information

Women traders have limited access to information and are often unaware of the laws, policies, and regulations for cross-border trade and taxation. As a result, they are often asked to pay high tax rates when crossing the border.¹¹ Women are also unaware of the legal mechanisms that exist to protect them and their rights. The regional trade bodies have not recognized the need for this information (among both female and male traders); according to a 2009 UN report, member nations of the EAC had not conducted any awareness campaigns about the significance of EAC membership or the protocols for cross-border trade.¹²

Gender Roles

Women face obstacles related to their traditional roles and responsibilities, as well as challenges based on social norms and beliefs.

Household responsibilities. Social norms throughout the region require women traders to fulfill family responsibilities.¹³ A key informant from Trade Mark East Africa confirmed that women's heavy workload and reproductive responsibilities limit women's mobility and their available time to engage in trade activities. The International Alert/UN Women report, "Walking in the Dark: Informal Cross-border Trade in the Great Lakes Region, 2012," observes that women traders must travel long distances to and from markets, mostly by foot, and that they are responsible for domestic duties and household tasks as well.

Border corruption. Gender roles influence how women advocate for themselves when faced with corruption. Women are less confident and assertive than men, when confronted with corrupt or intimidating behavior on the part of border officials.¹⁴ Typically, border agencies and posts are manned by men and do not have a culture of gender-sensitive procedures. A study conducted at four key border crossings in the Great Lakes region of Africa found that 82 percent of border officials were men. One interviewee from Trade Mark East Africa Rwanda pointed out that border agents in many instances are unaware of EAC policies and taxes (rather than simply corrupt), and they do not always understand the difference between informal and illegal trade.

Gender-based violence

Women's involvement in the trade industry can heighten their risk of GBV in a number of ways.

Economic empowerment and power imbalance. Women’s economic empowerment is critical to gender equality. However, real economic empowerment in turn requires addressing the underlying power imbalances that drive gender inequality. Indeed, a woman’s success in trade can sometimes result in increased incidents of GBV in her home, especially if it seems to challenge the household power dynamics.¹⁵ In a study by Titeca and Kimanuka in the Great Lakes region, men complained that “trade and the profits it generates has given ‘too much freedom’ to women” and that “economic independence represents a danger for the stability of the household.”¹⁶ They also note that women traders are sometimes able to overcome harassment in their role as traders by employing their husbands.¹⁷

Public transportation. Women informal traders are acutely affected by poor transportation infrastructure, as they are typically more reliant on public transportation than male informal traders, who are more likely to own bicycles and vehicles. Researchers have found that women traders in Tanzania and Zambia spend three times as much time in transport activities compared to men.¹⁸ Women also spend higher share of their income on transportation costs than men, eroding their profits and reducing their ability to invest in their business and other productive activities.

Cross-border transport. Due to the physical burden of transporting goods, women informal traders sometimes engage smugglers to move their goods across the border. This puts them at risk of fines or arrest if caught at the border, and also places them at risk of rape or sexual harassment by the smugglers.¹⁹ Both men and women suffer harassment from border authorities, including unnecessary fines and confiscation of goods, but harassment can also manifest in different ways for women. Women often experience sexual harassment and other forms of GBV when interacting with border and customs agents. According to a 2010 World Bank study, border officials had sexually harassed 30 percent of women traders interviewed by the World Bank in Uvira.²⁰ For example, women are often forced to have sex in exchange for favors, and border officials sometimes conduct abusive searches of women, forcing them to undress while checking to ensure they are not smuggling anything in their clothes.²¹

Risk and vulnerability. Research also indicates that women informal traders risk GBV, as well as robbery, while in transit to and from borders—on foot, on buses and trains, and at train and bus stops. The negative health implications of cross-border trading also appear more prominent for women than men. For example, HIV/AIDS transmission rates are often high as well at those border crossings where customs procedures are slow and lack transparency.

Gender and trade policies

East African governments place great importance on the economic implications of efficient and effective regional trade. National governments and regional organizations are dedicating resources to better understand and address gender dynamics within these complex economic systems. The East Africa Community has a gender policy and strategy as well as a gender unit under the directorate of social services and community. COMESA has a gender directorate with a gender policy and an affiliate agency promoting women in business (FEMCOM). The RIGOs have instruments in place that show commitment to gender. However, much of this effort is in response to donor requirements to mainstream gender.

Limited depth of analysis. While gender equity is given resources, there is not a holistic strategy to address cross-cutting trade-related constraints. Regional bodies carry out stand-alone gender activities that are uninformed by a gender analysis; thus, gaps still exist in understanding the needs and roles of women in trade. Even the USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub project had not done a gender analysis or developed a systematic approach to gender integration. As a result, many gender efforts are implemented piecemeal, without a holistic or long-term perspective; COMESA recently requested the support of ReSAKSS to undertake a gender study simply to provide a report to meet gender indicator and data disaggregation requirements. Gender specialists in trade bodies also lack the mandate to address regional trade constraints. For example, the East African Community gender specialist provides support only to the gender unit and not to other departments; it has no mandate to hold other departments accountable to gender policies or regional treaties.

Gender activities are often implemented merely to “box-check” against budget spending and donor requirements.

Trade-specific gender expertise. Adding to the complexity of gender dimensions in regional trade, there is a lack of trade-specific gender expertise and skills in agencies across the region. Accordingly, gender specialists in regional intergovernmental bodies are often unqualified, especially as certain positions are considered political and are allocated to a specific country regardless of available expertise. This was corroborated through key informant interviews in regional and country-level institutional bodies. The lack of specialized understanding among gender experts results in lost opportunities to better integrate women and men into ongoing trade and economic growth initiatives.

Recommendations

Power Imbalances

Women in general have limited knowledge about the rules and regulations governing these interactions, and are therefore on an unequal footing with their male counterparts. It would be valuable for USAID to promote targeted activities with its partners to address this information gap among traders and to uphold standards for regional border agents. Programs should include components that help men and women to explore the concepts of power in their own lives and how this relates to trade systems, in order to start transforming and addressing the social norms that create imbalances between men and women in the trade sector. It is also important to continue to strengthen understanding of the gender power dynamics among female and male traders and within cross-border organizational systems and staff by making this an explicit component of program design, monitoring and reporting, and follow up.

Reducing border harassment

Eliminating border harassment would facilitate trade between countries, not only boosting the income of informal traders but also adding considerably to the region’s economies. A number of USAID-funded entities are working to better understand and improve the process through a range of programs: providing additional monitoring and training of border officials, better tools and educational materials to publicize trade regulations and tariffs, support to women traders’ associations, and safe means to register complaints at borders. USAID should continue to support these activities.

Reporting mechanisms

Mechanisms are needed to report abuse, harassment, and corrupt practices by border officials, along with training to women and men traders and border staff on these procedures. The EAC could consider

(1) creating simple documents explaining the protocols and (2) collecting data on the experience of female and male traders (using an ethical, gender-sensitive data collection approach).²² More research should be conducted to learn how the EAC is addressing corruption of border officials and harassment of traders and to develop better policies and procedures.

Women in cross-border formal trade

It is important to support women’s engagement in the formal trade sector. USAID can support programs and policies that address specific gaps and challenges for women within this sector, including:

- Establish initiatives that promote women’s trading in the formal sector for products of which they are the primary producers, such as sorghum and beans, by enhancing access to inputs and technologies, facilitating engagement with other farmers/traders, and improving access to seeds. This will help to improve the yield of women traders and encourage formal cross-border trading.²³
- Design an initiative to promote women’s participation in export value chains, beyond the African Women’s Entrepreneurship Program (AWEP).
- Encourage partners to develop pictorial pamphlets to explain the process for crossing borders with trade goods, so that women who cannot read have access to the information.¹ Standardize pamphlets throughout East Africa border crossings, while also including contextually relevant information.

“I think it’s a cultural thing, where women are not thought to be significant contributors to economic development.”

— Interviewee from USAID/Growth, Enterprise, Employment, and Livelihood Project (Somalia)

Mobile money

Research is needed on the impact of mobile money and online systems on transparency within customs systems. In key informant interviews, women traders report greater safety, reduction in time spent accessing goods and services, and savings on transactional costs through the use of mobile money. Access to the internet and computer services may also increase efficiency and reduce corruption. For example, when Ghana introduced computerized cross-border services, women reported less harassment, efficiency in services, and an estimated reduction of corruption by 35 percent.²⁴

Gender technical capacity and resources

Governments and regional bodies should continue to invest in gender analysis and technical expertise to inform trade policies and practices; sustained resources are needed to better understand and address regional gender imbalances. However, the goal must be to understand the issues and address root causes, rather than to tick boxes by creating isolated interventions that overlook the complexity of the issue.

AGRICULTURE

Summary

¹ The effort could be funded through one of the regional trade authorities, or possibly the East Africa Trade and Investment Hub.

Agriculture is a key sector in East Africa, and women play key roles both in smallholder subsistence farming and farming for trade, contributing to all levels of the value chain across the sector.²⁵ Of the countries studied in this report, Djibouti is the exception: agriculture accounts for only 3.7 percent of GDP given the large service sector serving the military bases on the port.²⁶ According to the AGRA-Alliance, women comprise, on average, 50 percent of the agricultural labor force in the East Africa region.²⁷ Both women and men are highly active in the production, processing, and marketing of agricultural products. Men's and women's roles in agriculture are both gender-specific and shared: women and men perform certain traditionally distinctive roles while other functions are performed by both, according to the crop. Women typically make up the majority of agricultural labor in production-related tasks such as sowing, planting, weeding, and harvesting. Men's responsibilities include tilling the land with oxen or tractors and applying chemicals.²⁸

Typically, women both assist their husbands with their crops, including cash and export crops, and also grow their own crops, on smaller plots of land. Women generally grow crops to produce food for their families and sell the surplus for additional income. Women's agricultural work is thus essential to household food security and nutrition. Various studies have found that when women engage in agriculture activities, they invest a higher proportion of the proceeds within the household than men do, and women's role in agriculture creates tangible benefits in household food security and nutrition, healthcare, and education for children. Despite their importance, women's contributions to agriculture and economic growth are largely undervalued and unrecognized across the region.

Findings

Access to and control over resources and assets

Despite representing a significant proportion of agricultural labor, women have unequal access to and control over key agricultural inputs, including land and mechanized farming techniques. According to a 2012 USAID/Kenya gender analysis, lack of access to and control over inputs often result in women having lower agricultural yields than men. Lack of access and

control over resources also limit women's ability to act as decision-makers in their households or communities.²⁹ This, in turn, reinforces traditional gender roles within the household. Lack of decision-making authority and control over resources can also limit women's ability to attend agriculture trainings.

Land. In Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, and Kenya, significant strides have been made in adopting laws and regulations that promote equal access to land ownership for men and women, including inheritance laws. Yet challenges remain in translating policy into practice across the region, and men continue to own the majority of land. For example, 2014 research by USAID in Uganda, found that although 83 percent of employed women work in the agricultural sector, the vast majority of women do not own land.³⁰ Similarly, 2012 research in Rwanda found that women's ability to own and inherit land or property does not always translate into actual decision making power over these resources.³¹

Gender Spotlight

Gender equality and women' empowerment can have powerful effects on agricultural productivity and food security. FAO determined that agricultural yields globally would increase by 20–30 percent, if women had equal access to and control over productive resources. This could in turn increase total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5–4.0 percent, which would reduce the number of hungry individuals in the world by 12–17 percent.

This discrepancy between policy and implementation arises from a widespread reliance on traditional practices, customary law, and cultural norms and roles rather than formal legislation. According to traditional and customary practices across East Africa, a woman typically accesses land through her male family members —her father or brother if she is unmarried, and her husband once married. According to USAID Kenya’s 2012 Gender Analysis and Action Plan, most women either lack information about their rights to own land or have no way to act on their legal right to land, particularly in rural communities where cultural norms and beliefs are relied on more than laws, policies, and institutional practices.³²

Lack of decision making control over land and assets can lead to added challenges during times of economic hardship, such as climate events or conflict. For example, if she is unable to make the decision to sell or slaughter livestock to earn income or feed the household, a woman is deprived of an important coping strategy.³³ A married woman may be at risk of losing access to land and other income-producing assets if her husband dies, whether due to illness or conflict.³⁴ Women’s lack of control over land and assets thus increases their vulnerability in dealing with health and conflict-related issues.

USAID Kenya’s 2012 Gender Analysis and Action Plan gave this account of women who participated in the Agriculture Business and Environment Office’s *Feed the Future* programs: “[They found] it difficult to implement the training they have received from implementing agencies because they are prevented from applying practical knowledge by the landholder – their male partner – who may not appreciate the value of changing agricultural practices.”

Income. While women are generally able to keep the income they earn from their own crops, they typically lack control over proceeds derived from export and cash crops, despite playing a key role in the labor required to produce these crops. For example, an interviewee from USAID/Uganda related that although women are highly involved in coffee production, men collect the economic benefits of this exported cash crop. Women’s access to the proceeds of such crops is through their husbands, limiting women’s role as decision makers in the household as well as their ability to manage household funds.

Access to finance. Women throughout East Africa face challenges in accessing finance opportunities, limiting their scope in agriculture and entrepreneurship through their inability to purchase key agricultural assets such as livestock, seeds, fertilizer, and equipment, and machinery. According to a study by the African Development Bank (ADB), across many states in Africa, 4 out of 5 women lack access to an account at a financial institution, compared to just 1 out of 4 men.³⁵

Barriers to accessing finance include physical access, affordability, eligibility requirements, and regulatory processes. On the demand side, women’s barriers to finance include their perceptions of the value and cost of the product, the “hassle” factor, and general perceptions of formal products and institutions. Often, financial products are not designed with women’s needs in mind, and women often lack the collateral (such as ownership of land and houses) to qualify for loans at financial institutions. The ADB study found that the rejection rate for women is approximately 5 percent higher than for men. One interviewee described the special challenges in a traditional community: male-dominated financial institutions, including banks, are intimidating to women who might seek finance opportunities.

Innovation and gender roles. Equally important, this analysis found that women do not have equal access to agricultural trainings, particularly trainings on innovative approaches to agriculture. They are

often prevented from using such approaches by their male partners, who are reluctant to change long-established agricultural practices.³⁶ Traditional gender roles and responsibilities serve to limit women's ability to attend training on agricultural machinery or to implement farming techniques that require machinery or advanced technology.³⁷ Mechanized farming practices are traditionally seen as men's work, and these perceptions often prevent women from participating in mechanized farming or in trainings on mechanized techniques. Constraints in accessing resources also make it hard for women to purchase machinery. In addition, men often co-opt women's agricultural tasks, once they become mechanized.

Case Study: USAID/Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Project

The USAID/Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Project has adopted a clear gender strategy with three broad goals. 1) Target women farmers with trainings and activities to learn innovative farming techniques for market vegetables as well as commercialized production, processing, and trade techniques. 2) Engage with both women and men to promote equal decisionmaking by emphasizing the importance of women's empowerment. 3) Provide microenterprise activities for women, to generate resources to support their agricultural work.

USAID/ *Feed the Future* seeks to strengthen the links between agriculture and improved nutrition, by diversifying crop production and improving the delivery of nutrition services. This includes working with stakeholders to address the needs of small-scale farmers and harnessing the power of women to drive economic growth.

Gender Differences in Farming Techniques

Research throughout Africa highlights differences in farming techniques, approaches, and productivity, as between male and female farmers. For example, women are typically less likely to grow cash or export crops, since they have smaller plots of land and limited mechanization and access to markets.³⁸ Women also may lack access to inputs such as the intensive labor needed for more market-oriented crops, and they may be limited by social norms in what they may grow.

Mechanization and advanced technologies. Research has shown that 8 to 10 percent of the productivity gap of female farmers can be explained by limited mechanization.³⁹ Lack of mechanization opportunities was cited by an IGAD interviewee as a critical regional constraint for women in agriculture. Limited mechanization is coupled with a lower use of advanced agricultural technologies including pesticides and inorganic fertilizers. As a result, donors and governments are increasingly exploring and funding programs to support women's access to technology and innovative farming techniques. Some attempts at the use of cash vouchers or in-kind transfers have been used to facilitate women's increased use of machinery, and others explore leasing machinery. However, such efforts must be based on careful analysis and program design to avoid unintended harmful consequences, such as co-option of mechanization by men, or even GBV.

Nutrition

Gatekeepers of household nutrition. Women in East Africa generally serve as a crucial link between agriculture and household nutrition. Women are heavily involved in growing food for household consumption and are responsible for preparing meals for their families and often choosing what the family eats. However, while research found that women generally have some decision-making power

Gender Productivity Gap
Across Africa, women farmers are consistently found to be less productive than male farmers.

over crops grown and food purchased and prepared for family consumption, these choices are strongly affected by availability/access of food, including both grown and for purchase, availability of income, size of the household, and preferences of the male household head.

A study on agriculture and nutrition in East Africa by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) found that women's role in agriculture is positively associated with improved nutrition status within the household, particularly when women have decision making power over resource allocation.⁴⁰ Some studies have found that female heads of households provide a greater variety of foods, for themselves and their children.

Agricultural productivity. Increases in agricultural productivity have positive effects on nutrition. A joint report summarizes:

Closing the gender agriculture productivity gap can reduce poverty and improve nutrition: directly, because many poor people work in agriculture; and indirectly, because higher agricultural output may increase income for people employed in sectors linked to agriculture. At the same time, higher agricultural output can lead to lower food prices. The combined impact of increasing the income and agricultural productivity of the poor and lowering food prices could help improve nutrition by enabling poor people to purchase more and better food, and by increasing their access to food from their own production.⁴¹

Increasing women farmers' agricultural productivity (and thus income) has direct implications for issues of hunger and malnutrition, as women tend to spend more of their income on children's health and education.

Gender and Livestock

Gender Norms. Women and men play significantly different roles in livestock rearing, in both pastoral and farming communities. While men manage the larger animals like cows and camels, in line with cultural norms, women control the smaller ones—sheep, goats, and poultry—including rearing, vaccinating, and marketing. However, according to an interview with the African Union InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources, some women are starting to challenge traditional gender norms and are rearing cows and camels.

Gender implications of livestock disease prevention. Several interviewees reported that gender analysis and gender considerations are largely absent from livestock programming. According to an interview with the FAO, EAC investments in eradicating animal disease often ignore small ruminants (goats). Yet disease in small ruminants can be economically devastating for women, with far-reaching effects on household food security, nutrition, child education, and healthcare.

Cross-border challenges. Regional trade has led to outbreaks of cross-species disease transfer in cross-border areas between Kenya, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. These outbreaks have been dealt with by banning animal movement, live animal markets, and slaughtering for sale, as well as closing markets. While these measures are meant to reduce the regional impacts of animal disease, they have also impaired women's economic empowerment as well as household food security and nutrition. Interviewees described women having to compensate for the lost income by resorting to burning and marketing charcoal—a practice that is damaging to the environment and time-consuming for women who are already time-poor.

Recommendations

Improved gender integration in policy and practice

Better understanding is needed to develop effective and cost-efficient policy instruments to address hurdles faced by women farmers.⁴² Donors, policy makers, and governments must recognize that men and women face different constraints in improving agricultural practices; innovative and strategic thinking is essential to address women-specific constraints and to document what works and does not work. Gender analysis and considerations must be incorporated into all agriculture planning, investment, and implementation.

Improving women's labor productivity and addressing time constraints

The literature review points to the need to increase women's labor productivity and address time constraints by promoting labor-saving technologies on farms or at home, such as the use of energy-efficient and environmentally friendly cooking stoves.⁴³ Time saved can go to work that produces income and food for household consumption, and can allow women to spend more time caring for their children and providing nutritious meals for the household.⁴⁴

Another suggestion from the literature and from key informants is to find ways to enable women farmers to access hired labor. Cultural and social norms often preclude women hiring male labor, and there is little direct evidence of policies that address the labor shortages women face. Well-designed awareness and sensitization campaigns could promote changes in this area. Pilot projects are needed to validate what works and what doesn't work.

Promoting access and control over resources and assets

Both the literature review and key informant interviews suggest the need to (1) target trainings for women on innovative agricultural techniques and (2) devise education campaigns for female farmers on their legal land ownership rights.⁴⁵ Policies and programs focused on improving women's control over marketed outputs have also proved successful, and mobile banking was suggested to increase women's ability to control their income. Finally, to increase women's ability to access finance, specific financial products should be designed around women's needs, while making the business case to financial institutions that such investments will be profitable.

Promoting women-oriented value chains

Promote investment in women-dominated value chains that also offer high nutritional value—such as leafy vegetables, groundnuts, sweet potatoes, and maize—as a means of increasing women's resources and assets. Regional organizations such as COMESA suggest that programs be developed to increase awareness of women's role and value in agricultural production, to offset the gendered power balance throughout the region.⁴⁶ Women can also be integrated into existing value chains, building value as a part of the production and sale process of a specific good.⁴⁷

Adopting non-traditional roles

Investments should be made to support women in adopting value-added approaches and non-traditional roles within agriculture value chains. In 2010–2011, ACDI/VOCA led a study on gender and behavior change within agricultural value chains in Kenya and Ghana.⁴⁸ The study considered three areas of behavior: money management, business practices, and value chain relationships. Through desk review and field research, researchers analyzed how these areas differed for men and women. The study found that, in order to encourage women to go against gender norms in value chains, interventions must address multiple factors by leveraging the influence of trusted people, developing better knowledge of

possible outcomes, and breaking down complex decisions into steps that are easier to understand. Other helpful factors included provision contracts in women’s names, direct participation in non-cash payment systems, and financial education on accumulating and managing lump sums.

Strengthening women’s cooperatives and networks

Cooperatives can be a critical mechanism for women farmers to access information and opportunities on farming techniques, labor-saving technologies, and equipment, and to engage in collective marketing. Traditionally, farmers’ cooperatives have been male-dominated in both membership and leadership, but projects across East Africa have worked to strengthen women’s groups and networks. Investments should also be made to increase women’s participation in male-dominated cooperatives, by encouraging those groups to establish women’s sub-committees to enable women farmers to access information and training. As these sub-committees become active and male members see their added value, efforts can be made to encourage groups to elect women to leadership positions on cooperative boards.

Case Study: Expanding Women’s Roles in Cooperatives

The United Peasant of Tanzania (funded by the ILO COOPAFRICA-UN Joint Programme Challenge Fund) established a cooperative management training in Tanzania designed to raise awareness on gender equality for a group engaged primarily in cashew nut farming and processing. As a result of this project, women’s participation in the cooperative increased by 46 percent, and women’s total share in the cooperative rose to 24 percent.

“Woman-friendly” equipment refers to equipment that is designed with women’s physical capacities and reproductive demands in mind. Woman-friendly equipment does not require much physical strength, can be used when multitasking—such as while carrying children— uses time more efficiently, is easy to transport and is easily maintained or repaired.

Climate-smart agriculture

Climate-smart agricultural approaches will be critical to support sustainable farming in East Africa. It is critical to promote women’s participation in all efforts to promote climate-smart agriculture in the region, especially as climate risks emerge in coming years. A joint report observes:

Women often face constraints to reduced agricultural productivity due to unequal access to agricultural inputs such as land, labor, knowledge, fertilizer and improved seeds. Low agricultural productivity tends to reduce per hectare yields and leads to more intense farming—resulting in over cultivation, soil erosion and land degradation. These in turn further undermine agricultural productivity and environmental sustainability.⁴⁹

Regional efforts to promote climate-smart agriculture should make significant time and resource investments to promote women’s participation and leadership in programming. Investments can also be made to ensure that climate-smart agricultural innovations, such as new tools and seed varieties, are woman-friendly and tested with women in research, design, and pilot phases.

Unintended negative consequences

Both the literature review and key informant interviews indicated that, as agricultural products traditionally cultivated by women increase in profitability and commercial value, men are increasingly likely to co-opt those value chains, including production.⁵⁰ An interviewee from the FAO noted that, while women are generally responsible for raising small ruminants, men sometimes co-opt this value

chain (and keep the income) when herds become large. In Kenya, women make up less than 10 percent of smallholder farmers producing fresh fruit and vegetables for export.⁵¹ As sorghum and millet are increasingly produced for export, women's control of the supply chains of these crops have substantially decreased as men appropriate control over the crops.⁵² New interventions must incorporate strategies to offset these possible outcomes.

Case Study: Dairy Value Chain in Kenya

Men gradually took over the dairy value chain among Masai communities in Southern Kenya, after donor interventions increased yields. Milk and milk products were traditionally allocated as a responsibility of Masai women, who had relative autonomy in managing the milk products, selling or using them to strengthen their social networks.

As milk output increased through donor interventions, the methods needed to access markets changed. Women had to travel longer distances with larger quantities of milk, requiring use of a bicycle or car (which few women own). Thus, Masai men began controlling the milk production as well as marketing.

In discussing opportunities to expand women's roles in agriculture, a number of key informants warned of the associated risks of GBV. Women throughout East Africa often experience intimate partner violence and other forms of GBV, when they depart from traditional roles or engage in practices that are perceived as emasculating men. Interviewees advocated for risk-mitigation strategies to be integrated into agriculture and food security interventions. USAID/Kenya's 2012 Gender Analysis and Action Plan, for example, integrates GBV prevention and response measures, recommending that women seek joint titles to land and property.⁵³

Gender Spotlight

Environmental challenges affect men and women differently due to existing power imbalances and gender norms. In addition, women's involvement in managing environmental issues is limited. But substantial gaps exist in incorporating a gender analysis into environmental programming in the region.

ENVIRONMENT

Summary

The region faces a number of environmental challenges stemming from climate change as well as population growth, urbanization, and other factors. Deforestation, desertification, drought, and flooding are common throughout the region. Environmental challenges in East Africa affect men and women in different ways, owing largely to their different roles. Women have fewer endowments and entitlements, less access to information and services, and limited mobility, limiting their adaptive capacity to natural disasters, floods and seasonal fluctuations.⁵⁴

Climate change disproportionately affects poor communities and women.⁵⁵ Climate change and environmental shocks, coupled with socially-defined gender roles and relations, can exacerbate gender inequalities. While strategies exist within the region to address climate change and environmental concerns, there are gaps in integrating a gendered analysis of the issue and including women in the design and implementation of these efforts.

Findings

The gender analysis produced key findings in several important areas.

Gender, power, and household responsibilities

In their traditional roles as caregivers, food growers, and water and firewood gatherers, women and girls are especially connected to natural resources, making them vulnerable to environmental challenges.⁵⁶ Natural disasters, environmental degradation, and lack of access to water directly affect women's health as well as their unremunerated work and well-being.⁵⁷ Women in poor communities are doubly impacted by climate change, given their responsibilities for household resource management.⁵⁸

Firewood and water collection. Research has found that 60 to 80 percent of all firewood supplies in Tanzania, Sudan, and Kenya are collected by women and girls.⁵⁹ Girls are more likely than boys to be kept out of school to collect firewood; with population growth and deforestation, readily available firewood is increasingly difficult to find, requiring women to travel farther and longer to find the needed resources.⁶⁰ Note that total global forest area was reduced by 8.4 million hectares annually, from 1995 to 2005.⁶¹ Increasing incidences of climate-induced drought, with reduced surface water resources, mean that women and girls must travel farther to obtain water for their households. In Sub-Saharan Africa, women are responsible for obtaining water in 63 percent of rural households and 29 percent of urban households; girls under 15 are more likely to be in charge of water collection than are boys under 15.⁶² In Eritrea and Somalia, less than a third of the population has access to water within a 15-minute walk.⁶³ Longer trips mean that women have less time for other responsibilities, including productive labor, educational opportunities, and other household responsibilities—and they endure greater exposure to physical harm or injury, including GBV.⁶⁴ Women in the drier areas of East Africa are thus particularly vulnerable.⁶⁵

Limiting opportunities for women and girls. The declining availability of surface water, fuel wood, livestock feed, and other natural resources have a negative impact on women's time and labor, increasing their unpaid work and reducing the time available for their own education or for productive and reproductive tasks (like childcare). In addition, girls are more likely than boys to be kept out of school to collect firewood, water, and food.⁶⁶ Climate is also directly related to agricultural yields. The degree of control women have over agricultural production varies greatly across the region, but women are consistently the major producers in subsistence farming, where much of their labor is unpaid and not measured.

Cooking and women's and girls' health. Because women and girls spend more time cooking, indoor air pollution from cooking affects them significantly more than men. In East Africa, women usually cook on rudimentary stoves or on open fires using biomass, a practice that has negative consequences on health as well as the environment.⁶⁷ The most common cooking fuels are wood and charcoal. Cooking with low-grade biomass on rudimentary cooking devices in inappropriate cooking space creates increased exposure to high levels of carbon monoxide, smoke, and other toxic fumes.⁶⁸ Globally, over 4 million people die prematurely because of illness caused by air pollution from cooking with solid fuels.⁶⁹ Women, girls, and children are more consistently exposed to air pollution from cooking stoves. In central Kenya, women and girls aged 5–14 stay more indoors compared to men and boys in that age group, and are thus more exposed to cooking fumes (as are children under 5).⁷⁰ In Kenya, a woman usually spends more than 5 hours a day near a fire, whereas a man in the same group spends less than

an hour.⁷¹ A 5- to 14-year-old girl spends more than three hours a day near a fire, while a boy spends less than two hours.⁷² For this reason, over the past three decades international donors have been funding programs that focus on improving stove technologies in East Africa.⁷³ Several donor-led programs have tried to reduce indoor air pollution, but they lacked commercial sustainability and their adoption on the ground has been minimal.⁷⁴

Unequal power in decision-making and resource management. Women are often a source of creating adaptive capacities and building resilience. They frequently engage in activities such as rationing food, constructing water pans to store runoff for use during drier periods, selling baskets and ropes, and varying crop varieties and planting dates.⁷⁵ However, they often must seek approval from the head of the household for these activities. With greater power to decide on use of family resources, women would have greater ability to manage risks by diversifying crops and livestock or altering planting dates.

Pastoralist communities. Pastoralists face specific sets of challenges linked to gender and environment. Pastoral women have limited access to assets, resources, or networks; land is often passed down to their male kin. Women face the combined impacts of changing climate, poverty, and hunger, in addition to gender norms that inhibit their access to resources such as credit, fertilizers, improved seeds, and agricultural extension programs.⁷⁶

Capacity-building for water management. Water scarcity directly impacts women, who are the managers of water for their households and have the responsibility of finding water for their families. The analysis found a lack of programs assisting communities to practice better water management, including storage, harvesting of water, and purification techniques.

Gender-based violence

An important correlation was found between environmental events, particularly climatic shocks such as the droughts and floods prominent in the region, and incidents of violence.

Firewood collection and sexual assault. Wood is the primary source of household energy for rural areas of East Africa.⁷⁷ In addition, firewood can be an important source of income, particularly for displaced populations. As noted above, the task of firewood collection falls on women or girls, who sometimes walk up to 30 kilometers to find enough firewood.⁷⁸ In such instances, women and girls are at heightened risk of sexual assault. In situations of mass displacement (e.g., refugee camps), it is even riskier for women and girls to travel long distances to obtain water and firewood.⁷⁹

Risks for internally displaced persons and refugees. The presence of armed militia near camps and the lack of security for women collecting firewood create one of the main risk factors for GBV among refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).⁸⁰ This is directly linked to dependency on firewood for cooking, as well as the use of firewood for income generation.⁸¹ During situations of conflict and natural disaster, firewood becomes a particularly important source of income, as previous means of income have been disrupted.⁸² The issue of firewood collection and GBV is especially relevant to Somali women in Kenya, Rwandan women in Tanzania, and other displaced women in the region.⁸³

Environmental shocks

Environmental shocks, such as floods and droughts, can be devastating to all members of an affected population. However, there are important gender dimensions to these events that create disproportionate affects for women and girls.

Drought and gender roles. The most obvious impact of drought is the lack of water for livestock and crops. In pastoralist communities, increasingly prolonged and more frequent periods of drought mean that men and boys may be forced to move herds to further distances in order to access water resources and grazing land. Women traditionally remain at home, often acting as *de facto* heads of households. The increasing distances men must travel also increases the amount of time that women must assume the full array of household responsibilities.

A woman is *de jure* head of household if she has no husband, whether from divorce, death, or never married.
A woman acts as *de facto* head of household when her husband is temporarily or permanently absent from home.

Unequal power of women as heads of household. Greatly increased incidence of drought or flooding can render existing agriculture-based livelihoods unproductive.⁸⁴ This causes men to out-migrate in search of alternative livelihoods, making women *de facto* heads of households—usually with limited financial resources and assets.⁸⁵ Social norms can exacerbate these financial challenges; customary law often prohibits women from owning land or other property assets, such as livestock.⁸⁶ Without legal authority over their land or property, women are unable to make key decisions like selling or slaughtering livestock, hampering their ability to run the household particularly when there are economic stresses. They also are at risk of losing their land or livestock, lacking legal or customary property rights.⁸⁷

Women may be required to obtain male permission to travel outside of the community, to spend income, or to attend trainings. In some cases, *de facto* female heads of households may have decision-making power, but this is the exception, not the norm.

Environment as a driver of conflict. Research shows that environmental shocks are drivers of conflict. Livestock losses, for example, can lead to cattle raids and ensuing violence. When resources dip below minimum sustenance levels, some community members resort to violence or criminal activity. For example, a six-month drought in East Africa between 2014 and 2015 increased instability and insecurity in the region, with clashes over water resources.⁸⁸ At such times, women and girls become more vulnerable, given their lower status in society and limited mobility, with the breakdown of societal structures that help to protect them. The increase of small arms use, including automatic weapons, escalates levels of violence to include rape and murder.

Lack of gender analysis. On the international level, there is little systematic collection and analysis of data on gender impacts of natural disasters.⁸⁹ The limited evidence that exists suggests that, globally, gender roles and norms have important influence in the aftermath of disasters.⁹⁰ As mentioned above, gender power dynamics may limit women's and girls' ability to respond with resilience and take charge of their own futures. Further research and analysis are needed to understand and address the gendered dimensions of natural disasters and environmental protection.

Limited involvement and access for women

Women have limited involvement in environmental protection, or in management of natural resources.⁹¹

Unequal access to technology and resources. Overall in the region, women farmers lack access to technologies and agricultural inputs, including mechanization, or even weather information needed to plan agricultural activities. Men have more access to needed information but they may not apply it, and

they do not pass information to women who do most of the subsistence farming. In Kenya, forest management groups that had higher proportions of women were found to be less efficient due to less access to technology, labor constraints specific to women, and possibly limited sanctioning authority.⁹²

Recovery from natural disasters. Women's involvement in the recovery from a natural disaster tends to be limited, due to lower education levels as well as gender biases.⁹³ There is little data on women's participation in reconstruction efforts or environmental management in East Africa.⁹⁴

Recommendations

Gender analysis and research

Despite the important gender dimensions of climate change and other environmental issues, the literature on resilience and gender is sparse. More research needs to be conducted to understand how gender dynamics relate to resilience programming, specifically to address the issues of drought, deforestation, and flooding that are prevalent in the region. Research should explicitly engage women in order to hear their perspectives and learn about the specific impacts of climate change and other environmental issues on their day-to-day lives. Additionally, research should look at measures that are already being taken by women to address the effects of climate change on their communities.

Women's involvement in capacity building

Programs aimed at reducing vulnerability to climate change must engage women at all stages and take specific measures to ensure their participation. As the direct users of many natural resources, women's input should be included in any relevant programs, such as informing the placement of boreholes. Programs should also:

- learn about strategies women are already using, and build on these strategies
- recognize women as key players in disaster risk reduction as well as recovery, and ensure their meaningful involvement
- build women's capacity in relevant environmental issues such as natural resource management (especially water conservation), environmental protection, and disaster risk reduction and recovery
- provide institutional and financial support to smallholders to support climate-smart agriculture technologies (as COMESA has recommended)⁹⁵
- be based in a solid gender analysis, so that they do not inadvertently cause women extra burdens or harm

Addressing power imbalances and gender norms

To effectively address environmental issues, it is necessary to address the power imbalances and gender norms that cause women and girls to be disproportionately affected. Environmental programs should integrate gender analysis into their strategies and connect with programs that aim to transform social norms.⁹⁶ Such programs can help facilitate women's access to alternative livelihood activities and lessen the burden of environmental shocks and climate change. Advocacy can help to promote gender-equitable policies, such as increasing women's rights over land.

Gender-based violence

Environmental programs must work to protect the safety and security of women in relevant areas such as firewood and water collection, cooking safety, etc. Measures should be put in place to mitigate risk across sectors and to ensure proper referral and response services when incidents occur. Longer-term

programming to effect social norm change may also be an important part of disaster risk-reduction, recovery, and environmental management strategies.

Linking conflict management and environment strategies

There are important connections between conflict management and environmental management. Programs should develop integrated strategies for addressing these two issues that highlight the areas of overlap. It is essential to foster participation of both women and men in such approaches while trying to address the root cause of conflicts.

Information management

There is a need to establish systems for managing information on gender and the environment, particularly climate change. Similarly, monitoring and evaluation frameworks for environmental and agricultural programs in the region should include clear gender dimensions. Databases on key issues—such as gender use of technology for agriculture, including weather reporting systems—could be created, through programs like the ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) Program or academic institutions.

Special efforts should be made to ensure women’s access to environmental information, particularly women farmers, such as accessing data on mobile phones. Farm extension services need to know how to access data and inform women farmers, in training and workshops.

Regional cooperation and experience sharing

Funding and leadership are needed to bring together women from different communities of East Africa who are facing similar challenges related to climate change, to share approaches to adaptation and mitigation. This is seen as valuable by many organizations focusing on climate change and women’s agency, such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

HEALTH

Summary

East Africa faces some of the greatest health challenges in the world, including high fertility rates and relatively low usage of modern contraception, relatively high maternal and infant mortality, and high prevalence of malaria, HIV and AIDS, and tuberculosis. However, the region has made significant strides in addressing these issues. According to the EAC Report on HIV and AIDS programming, all the EAC countries are making progress in eliminating new HIV infections among children and in halving AIDS-related maternal deaths. Kenya, Burundi, and Tanzania are also on track to halve the sexual transmission of HIV.⁹⁷ Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda have managed to increase access to HIV treatment for people living with HIV and AIDS; Tanzania has yet to achieve its targets. In Rwanda, the maternal mortality ratio dropped by more than half between 2004 and 2010, from 849 to 340 deaths per 100,000 live births.⁹⁸ In Uganda, the maternal mortality ratio dropped from 530 to 310 during the same period. Increasingly, the EAC countries are recognizing the impact of regional health issues on the well-being of their populations. While some initial steps have been taken to address these issues, substantial health challenges remain that require greater regional collaborative effort to improve health outcomes for women, men, girls, and boys.

Regional health issues are influenced significantly by gender and power dynamics. Power imbalances and gender roles constrain women’s access to healthcare and resources, foster economic dependency on men, and impair their ability to negotiate the terms of sexual exchanges. Gender norms also shape risk-taking and health-seeking behaviors as well as acceptability of GBV. These factors have an adverse effect on the health of women and girls and increase their vulnerability to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. To be successful, health interventions need to take into account this gender-power analysis and work to address underlying imbalances between men and women alongside other contextual influences.

Gender Spotlight

Gender norms create an imbalance of power between men and women that substantially curtails women’s access to healthcare and control over their own health and well-being.

This leads to a range of negative health outcomes for women and their families, including increased risk of violence and HIV.

To be successful, health programs must address these underlying power imbalances.

Findings

The analysis confirmed that gender-power dynamics greatly influence the health landscape in the region. The hierarchical relationships of power between women and men put women at a disadvantage; across the region, women and men do not have the same opportunities to enjoy health and have access to health services. This manifests in a number of important ways.

Power imbalance and access to healthcare

Power imbalances between men and women significantly limit access to healthcare and quality of health for women and girls. The literature on gender and health in East Africa highlights the importance of access to and control over resources. Unequal gender power dynamics mean that women have limited control over their own health and wellbeing and that of their families.

Women’s unequal power in decisionmaking. Women often have to request permission and financial support from their husbands in order to seek medical attention—including seeing a doctor or going to a clinic (as described by USAID researchers in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Uganda).⁹⁹ Furthermore, women in rural areas often need to travel long distances to go to a clinic or hospital, which again requires permission and/or financial support from their partners. According to a 2014 USAID Rwanda report, women who do not have decision making power in their households cannot “exercise their full potential, claim for their rights, and promote overall family wellbeing. . . they fail to respond to their own and family healthcare needs.”¹⁰⁰

De-valuing girls’ health. Gender inequalities limit girls’ access to healthcare. The 2014 USAID Rwanda report notes that, for families with little means, families need to determine if they are willing “to invest equally in the health of girls.”¹⁰¹

Harmful masculinities. Gender roles that valorize masculinity and virility of men have a range of adverse health effects for women, men, and families. In addition to promoting an imbalance of power and GBV (see below), rigid conceptions of masculinity can prevent men and boys in the region from seeking medical care. A 2013 UNAIDS study of Rwanda found that “gender norms that promote an image of a strong and powerful man are likely to restrict men and boys’ health-seeking behavior.”¹⁰² A gender analysis conducted by USAID in Rwanda in 2014 similarly found that healthcare is considered a

“feminine affair,” an activity suited for women.¹⁰³ A stakeholder interview at the Rwanda Men’s Resource Center highlighted how traditional norms and expectations around masculinity can promote men’s adoption of risky behaviors, including alcoholism, physical fights, and other forms of violence, as well as sexual activity that can lead to HIV/AIDS and STIs.

Rigid gender roles. Gender norms, roles, and constraints influence health risk factors as well as health-seeking behaviors, for both women and men. For example, gender roles that shape the division of labor, leisure patterns, and sleeping arrangements lead to different patterns of exposure for women and men to mosquitos that cause malaria. Women often wake up before dawn to perform household chores, increasing their risk of being bitten by mosquitos. In some areas, conversely, men are more at risk of contracting malaria if they work in mines, fields, or forests at peak mosquito times, or if they migrate for work to areas with greater mosquito prevalence.¹⁰⁴ Women’s restricted mobility, heavy workloads, and time constraints can also hamper their ability to seek treatment for malaria and other illnesses. In addition, due to traditional gender roles, men typically are not fully engaged in their wives’ pregnancies and subsequent childcare. An interviewee from the Rwanda Men’s Resource Center explained that men who engage in caregiving behaviors often risk stigma. When both partners are unable to engage positively in reproductive health and childcare, health risks persist for women and children. However, engaging men in reproductive healthcare without addressing underlying gender imbalances can cause further harm to women.

Gender-based violence. Power imbalance between men and women is the root cause of GBV, which continues to be a serious public health concern and violation of women’s rights. A 2013 study by the WHO confirms that the problem is widespread and that it deeply affects women’s mental and physical health.¹⁰⁵ Health consequences include pain, memory loss, dizziness, gynecological disorders, unintended and early pregnancy, induced abortions, miscarriages, mental distress and suicide attempts, physical harm, unsafe sexual practices, HIV, and even death. In addition, negative consequences of violence may persist long after the violence has ended.¹⁰⁶ WHO points out that the health sector plays vital role in preventing GBV—helping to identify abuse early, providing necessary treatment, and referring victims to appropriate care.

GBV and HIV

The gender dimensions of the HIV epidemic throughout Africa are well documented. According to UNAIDS, in Sub-Saharan Africa 58 percent of people living with HIV are women, while young women aged 15–24 account for 4 out of 10 new infections.¹⁰⁷ Violence is a key risk factor for HIV among women.

GBV is both a cause and consequence of HIV. The violence that women experience puts them at risk for HIV (and speeds the onset of AIDS), while women’s HIV-positive status puts them at risk of violence. According to a recent UNAIDS report, women are 55 percent more likely to be HIV-positive if they have experienced intimate partner violence.¹⁰⁸ Women in violent relationships are less likely to effectively negotiate the use of condoms and are therefore at higher risk to contract HIV.¹⁰⁹ Women in the region generally do not feel empowered either to ask their partners to wear a condom or to refuse sex with their partners.¹¹⁰ In addition, notions of masculinity that emphasize control of women and male toughness often translate into high-risk sexual behaviors for men. According to the WHO, male perpetrators of violence are more likely to have multiple sex partners, thus increasing the chances of infecting their partners with HIV.¹¹¹

Women are also at risk of further incidence of violence due to their HIV-positive status or discordant results. A woman's positive result can provoke anger and blame from her partner, including incidences of violence, particularly if her partner is not also positive.¹¹² Women suffer from the burden of double stigmatization—fear of speaking openly about violence, and the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS—and are at risk for further violence as a result. The simple act of getting tested places women under social scrutiny and at risk of further violence.¹¹³

Harmful Traditional Practices

The analysis found that harmful traditional practices persist throughout the region, with severe impacts on the health of girl children, adolescent girls, and young women. Health consequences continue into adulthood and hinder the healthy development of girls and women. Countries where girls and women are unable to reach their full potential are also less able to innovate and thrive.¹¹⁴

Child, early, and forced marriage. Child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM) has a detrimental effect on girls' and women's health in the region. Child brides are neither physically nor emotionally ready to become wives and mothers and are without power in their households. They are thus at greater risk for dangerous complications in pregnancy and childbirth, for becoming infected with HIV/AIDS, and for domestic violence. They are deprived of their fundamental rights to health, education and safety. Dependent on their husbands and lacking access to economic and educational opportunities, they and their families are more likely to live in poverty.

According to USAID's CEFM Resource Guide, CEFM is prevalent in East and Southern Africa: more than one in three girls is married before the age of 18.¹¹⁵ Across Africa, child brides are most likely to be found in rural areas and among the poorest segment of the population.¹¹⁶ In Kenya and Zambia, "married girls ages 15 to 19 were 75 percent more likely to have contracted HIV than sexually active, unmarried girls."¹¹⁷ In South Sudan, dowry payment gives husbands the feeling they have purchased their wife and therefore have right to abuse her; that custom also allows for early marriage.¹¹⁸

Female genital cutting/mutilation. Female genital cutting/mutilation (FGC/M) still exists in East Africa, with prevalence rates of 15 percent in Tanzania, 27 percent in Kenya, 74 percent in Ethiopia, 93 percent in Djibouti, and 98 percent in Somalia.¹¹⁹ FGM is a self-enforcing social norm perpetuated by both women and men.¹²⁰ It is often justified in terms of cleanliness/hygiene, social acceptance, better marriage prospects, preservation of virginity, more sexual pleasure for the man, and religious necessity.¹²¹ Although FGM is not affiliated with any religion, the belief that it is a religious requirement contributes to continuation of the practice. In Kenya, a higher proportion of rural women (36 percent) than urban women (21 percent) have been circumcised.¹²² Additionally there is a strong relationship between education level and circumcision: 58 percent of women who have no education were reported to be circumcised, compared to only 21 percent of educated women. In Ethiopia, less than one-third of the women interviewed want to continue the practice of FGM.¹²³

Women’s organizations have had some success in reducing FGM in certain areas of East Africa, using community-based approaches that highlight the negative consequences of the practice and also offer alternative rites of passage, garnering support from local leaders and champions against the practice. National plans to combat FGM such as in Tanzania have been effective in reducing the practice.¹²⁴ Although most countries have laws in place criminalizing FGM, there is poor enforcement of these laws and prosecution rates are low.¹²⁵

Spotlight on Girls

Investment in adolescent girls is vital for strengthening communities and fostering development in the region. However, analysis of the specific issues facing adolescent girls is a key area for development that often gets overlooked, even in gendered programming. USAID has funded several regional programs that have a strong focus on adolescent girls:

- 1) *DREAMS* is a PEPFAR-funded project which is expected to kick off in ten countries and focuses on adolescent girls and young women (ages 10–24).**
- 2) *Let Girls Learn*, an initiative launched by Michelle Obama, is designed to keep girls in school. It currently focuses on two countries in Africa, Tanzania and Malawi.**
- 3) *PAMOJA TWALEE*—a Swahili phrase for “Together Let’s Bring Them Up”—is a program started in 2011 focusing on orphaned and vulnerable children, *both girls and boys*.**

Maternal Mortality

Maternal mortality refers to deaths due to complications from pregnancy or childbirth. Despite important progress in maternal mortality globally (marked by a decline of 44 percent from 1990 to 2015), the risk of death associated with pregnancy and childbirth for women in the region remains a critical concern.¹²⁶ In South Sudan and Somalia, maternal mortality rates far exceed the norm and access to maternal health services is extremely low. According to UNICEF, one out of 12 women in Somalia dies due to pregnancy-related causes; the maternal mortality rate is 732 deaths of mothers for 100,000 live births—down from 1210 in 1990.¹²⁷ Access to maternal health services is low: 44 of births in Somaliland and 38 percent in Puntland are attended by skilled birth attendants. The alarming maternal mortality rates reflect not only the quality of available antenatal and obstetric care, but also women’s lack of power and decision making authority, as highlighted in many of the interviews with key stakeholders.

Cross-border challenges

The region as a whole faces particular health challenges related to transportation and migration across borders. The gender-power dynamics already described also arise when crossing borders, and interventions to address cross-border challenges must take into account these imbalances.

Transportation corridors and HIV transmission. The transportation corridors that connect East African countries to the rest of the continent are also a major transmission route for HIV. According to the USAID ROADS Project, “high unemployment and underemployment, multiple concurrent sexual partnerships, substance abuse, widespread gender-based violence and poor access to quality health services—including HIV prevention, care and treatment services—all fuel HIV transmission.” All of these factors have important gender dimensions.

Cross-border access to ARVs. Studies of the region point out that individuals in treatment for AIDS are assigned to specific anti-retroviral therapy (ART) service provision centers; they may not be able to access medication once they cross borders, due to strict record-keeping and treatment requirements. This issue of cross-border access to ART affects both women and men.

Health services in cross-border areas. Health services in cross-border areas are often weak, inaccessible, and unaffordable. Due to the mobile nature of the population, these areas can be seen as a “no man’s land,” where local governments do not feel responsible for the needs of the transient population or of the vulnerable resident population. Interviews revealed that health services in these areas are often inadequate and do not take into account the gender and cultural norms that may prevent or encourage people to seek care.

Case Study: The Cross Border–Health Integrated Partnership Project

The Cross Border–Health Integrated Partnership Project (CB-HIPP) has introduced a new way to think about transnational health threats and solutions. The project—funded by USAID through the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) cross-border health initiative—targets ten sites, with the objective of increasing access to integrated health and HIV/AIDS services at strategic cross-border sites in East Africa at land and wet borders. As a regional project, CB-HIPP addresses cross-border gaps in health services among key populations, including mobile and vulnerable populations.

Limits to cross-border health financing. Increased trade and regional integration lead both men and women to cross borders in search of livelihoods; however, health financing has not caught up with this trend. The relatively few people who have health insurance typically are not able to access its benefits once they leave their home countries. Demographic health surveys from the various EAC countries show that women and men have different access to medical insurance, which often covers HIV/AIDS-related illnesses and complications. With the exception of Rwanda,¹²⁸ where women represent 71 percent of medical insurance holders, medical coverage for both men and women is below 25 percent. In Uganda, only 1 percent of women and 2 percent of men have medical insurance. Innovative health financing mechanisms are needed to cover both men and women, as they move across borders.

Recommendations

Power analysis in health programming

For health programs to be effective, they must recognize and address the underlying power dynamics between women and men that affect health-related risks and behaviors. Interventions must consider the different needs of women and men, rather than applying uniform strategies that are gender-blind. Approaches must work to dismantle power imbalances that have negative health consequences, while being careful not to put women at further risk of violence. Programs need to introduce the concepts of power and power imbalance, engaging with community members to explore these concepts in their own lives. Programs must examine how these power dynamics affect women’s health and explore steps to help balance power in accessing healthcare and pursuing wellbeing. This approach may require a new framing of familiar issues such as gender and power. It will require going beyond educating people about their rights, to provoking critical thinking and discussion.

Inclusive, community-based approaches

The social norms that validate and perpetuate harmful gender differences are upheld across all sections of a community and society, including women and men, leaders and lay people, educated and non-educated. Therefore, approaches to improve health outcomes must engage women and men while remaining conscious of the dynamics between them. Most programming focuses either on empowering women or on engaging men; few programs work to engage both women and men in breaking down gender norms and balancing power. Programs should also address the specific needs of adolescent girls.

Community-led design

The FHI 360 ROADS project engages communities to facilitate the design, implementation, and monitoring of program initiatives. It provides a platform for women and men to be included in governance and decision making, while promoting community designs for inclusive and sustainable solutions. Working with communities to design and implement health solutions has proven a sustainable platform, six years after implementation (in 2010). Helping communities to take accountability while empowering them to take decisions for their own welfare promotes sustainable approaches that communities will continue to use long after the program. Documentation on the communities' clusters approach can be used to promote other community-based interventions. A pilot for a similar approach should be developed in other sectors, such as trade, agriculture, conflict and governance, and environment and climate change.

Connecting GBV and HIV

In order to be successful in the regional fight against HIV and AIDS, programs must address the link between GBV and HIV/AIDS. This link is not being made clear by organizations on the ground. Common approaches to preventing HIV typically do not take into account the imbalance of power between men and women, such that women do not have equal control over decision-making and strategies to prevent HIV infection. For example, the ABC approach promotes three approaches—Abstain, Be Faithful, Use Condoms—without acknowledging that women do not have power to use any of the three strategies. Moreover, NGOs often lack the capacity to demonstrate the connection they recognize between GBV and HIV/AIDS.¹²⁹ This remains a missed opportunity: HIV health and psychosocial services offer a rare entry point for access to GBV services. Innovative programs such as SASA! (by Raising Voices, in Kampala) are able to successfully link the two issues and build greater awareness within communities.

Research and Information

The roles of women and men in access to health care and control of health systems remains a subject to be studied; limited information is available in the various country Demographic Health Surveys and regional studies. Specific gender studies have not been undertaken, even though gender is included in the reporting requirements for country interventions. There is a need for robust gender analyses and mainstreaming in regional health structures, with consideration of the differing needs and accessibility of women and men, boys and girls. Other potential areas for research include: the regional implications of CEFM; how the gender of the health care provider affects women's and men's health-seeking behaviors; differences between male- and female-headed households in accessing healthcare; and approaches to overcoming stigma for men and women challenging gender norms.

Policy and Regional Coordination

To date, only a few regional policy efforts and coordination initiatives have been conducted, spearheaded by the EAC's Regional Task Force on Integrated Health and HIV AIDS Programming along Transport Corridors in East Africa. As USAID and other donors work with the Regional Task Force to

strengthen policy and regional coordination, it will be important to integrate gender analysis findings into regional coordination efforts and analyze specific health issues as they arise with a gender lens. Despite the successes of the USAID-funded approaches highlighted above—CB-HIPP and ROADS—the two programs have not partnered or connected in any way, creating silos between these USAID regional programs.

Investments in the health social enterprise sector or other innovative platforms need to be piloted before scale, exploring various gender opportunities, and must be designed in collaboration with both social enterprises and service recipients. Such pilots would be valuable not only in the health sector but also in finance, agriculture, and trade.

CONFLICT

Summary

East Africa remains one of the most unstable regions of the world, with various prolonged conflicts over recent decades, unresolved tensions, and a high degree of militarization.¹³⁰ Conflict entails violence, destruction of resources, displacement of populations, and other socioeconomic and political shocks, undermining the legitimacy of social institutions, disrupting communities, and breaking trust between individuals. Its effects extend across borders, affecting the entire region.¹³¹ Conflict in the DRC, Northern Uganda, Somalia, Burundi, and South Sudan have had far-reaching impacts on the entire East Africa region. As populations flee violence, they seek temporary and permanent refuge, either in new communities within their home-countries, as internally-displaced populations (IDPs), or in other countries, as refugees. Conflict-related flight and relocation can have serious consequences on livelihoods, health, trade, food security and nutrition, and environment. For example, of 1.5 million currently displaced in Somalia, 600,000 are women of reproductive age and more than 80 percent lack access to safe maternal delivery.

Findings

Women generally suffer disproportionately from conflict, through systematic sexual violence, greater levels of displacement and relocation in refugee camps with high mortality rates, and social and economic vulnerability.¹³² However, women as well as men can be combatants, victims, civilians, leaders, and caretakers.¹³³ Women may actively participate in violence, whether directly, as combatants, or indirectly, by inciting male relatives to commit acts of violence. A key informant from USAID/KEA highlighted that women often serve as instigators in regional pastoral conflict, encouraging male family members to raid livestock as a means of feeding the family.

Both the literature and interviews point to gender differences in how women and men cope with the stress and trauma of conflict. Post-conflict women in Uganda reported more suicidal and homicidal thinking, while men reported more problems with alcohol misuse and were reported to have completed more suicides.¹³⁴ Women often rely on their social networks or turn to religion as a source of comfort.¹³⁵

Accessing new roles and opportunities. Gender analysis research has found that conflict in East Africa can sometimes manifest itself as an opportunity to expand or change existing gender roles. A key

informant from Promundo East Africa explained that women become de facto heads of households while their husbands serve as combatants or peacekeepers, allowing them to engage in new roles and decision making within the household. Interviewees in Rwanda confirmed literature accounts describing how the Rwandan genocide resulted in a shift in traditional gender roles. Many women lost their husbands and were forced to adapt to new roles and responsibilities, as heads of households and primary breadwinners for their families and within communities. As noted by Uwineza and Pearson, “an entire generation of exiled Tutsi Rwandans therefore grew accustomed to female-headed households and witnessed mothers, on their own, raising children.”¹³⁶ Protracted conflict in Somalia has also resulted in shifts in gender roles, with more women earning incomes, becoming heads of households, and engaging in household decision-making. In addition, women are often on the forefront of emergency care and trauma healing within communities, making them vital to conflict stabilization and mitigation within communities.

However, stakeholder and literature research also found that in some cases, insecurity and conflict can result in challenges to women’s rights, reinforcing traditional gender norms. For example, in Somalia, conflict has led to the re-emergence of customary law and patrilineal clan-based political representation, excluding women from politics and judicial structures. Women whose clan affiliation is diluted through intermarriage typically experience challenges in gaining clan support for political representation. A key informant from Promundo said that returning refugees from the DRC brought patriarchal gender norms from the bush back home with them.

Masculinity and male gender roles. Conflict generally promotes hyper-masculinity in combatants, which is often encouraged by military institutions. These hyper-masculine roles are often hard to renounce.¹³⁷ The normalization of violence has a dramatic effect on a man’s life post-conflict, which can often lead to difficult transitions, with higher rates of domestic violence as well as coping mechanisms such as alcohol or substance abuse. The sudden loss of a hyper-masculine identity can be traumatic, and reassertion of violence in the private sphere may constitute a form of compensation for loss of public status and hegemony.¹³⁸

The iconic notion of men as protectors and providers for their families and communities is a deeply entrenched gender norm, intimately linked with traditional concepts of masculinity. Men can feel powerless and emasculated when they are unable to fill these roles in times of conflict, and this often contributes to a pervasive sense of loss. Feelings of emasculation can be further exacerbated as women cope with the absence of male family members by taking on new roles as heads of households and sole breadwinners. Nearly two-thirds of men who experience conflict report negative psychological consequences, including loss of capacity to love or trust others.¹³⁹ Additionally, although there are lower rates of reporting, men are also victims of sexual violence during wartime. Loss of physical or mental strength also leads to a lack of sexual desire or impotency and a sense of emasculation.¹⁴⁰ Additionally, research found that men often use GBV as a means to regain a sense of control or reinforce their masculinity post-conflict.

Case Study: USAID PEACE III

The USAID/PEACE III project is working to reduce regional conflict in East Africa. The program has two objectives: 1) to strengthen local cross-border conflict management systems, and 2) to improve the responsiveness of regional and national institutions to cross-border conflict, in order to scale up

successful conflict management mechanisms and relationships. The project seeks to integrate gender considerations into programming around livestock disputes and conflict, explores ways to work with young men to provide alternative forms of livelihood, and engages community-based organizations to promote trauma healing.

Conflict in Pastoralist Communities

Disputes over livestock are frequent sources of local and community-based conflict in many parts of the region, especially in pastoralist communities. Animals are an important resource, and for some households they represent the majority of family wealth. Fighting over livestock includes both traditional and commercial raids of animals, as a strategy to re-build assets. Raids are primarily conducted by young men. According to an interviewee from the PEACE III Program, livestock raids can also be driven by gender norms and practices, as they are often regarded as a means to prove one's "manhood" and can be used to secure a dowry. Pastoralist conflict is also driven by environment stresses: cattle raids occur more frequently following big shocks like floods, drought, and disease outbreaks. Due to prevailing gender roles and norms, men are normally out with the herds, leaving women, children, and the elderly vulnerable to livestock raids. Raids often result in the kidnapping, killing, rape, or sexual assault of women and children.

Key informant interviews found that some regional stakeholders are working to promote alternative livelihood options for young men in pastoralists communities who engage in livestock raids. Efforts are focused around settling groups around water sources so they can engage in agriculture such as maize production, in addition to livestock rearing. However, the effort to convert nomadic herders into farmers has not been successful overall. Some planners are realizing that the best use of arid land involves continued pastoralism rather than shifts to commercialized livestock raising and farming. It is also critical that both women and men are able to participate in agriculture skill-building opportunities. However, efforts to promote crop production among pastoralists must be mindful of women's existing roles within communities, since women are likely to be tasked with much of the agricultural labor, in addition to their existing responsibilities such as tending the animals as well as family and reproductive care.

Gender-based violence and conflict

Sexual violence as a weapon. Sexual assault has been widely used as a tool of war in armed conflict throughout the region. GBV creates an atmosphere of fear and submission, contributing to the intentional destabilization, humiliation, and degradation of entire populations and communities.¹⁴¹ Interviewees across a range of sectors and institutions in Rwanda discussed how rape and sexual assault were used as weapons of warfare during the genocide, and reported that GBV was being utilized as a similar tactic in DRC and Burundi.

Increased vulnerability. War and displacement increase women's vulnerability to GBV, especially in refugee settings. For example, research has found that of the roughly 1.5 million IDPs in Somalia, 70 to 80 percent are women, and they face an increased risk of sexual violence.¹⁴² Women and children are often exposed to GBV, including sexual or physical abuse, both in the process of fleeing their homes and once they reach IDP/refugee camps. Factors that increase GBV in camps include: a higher acceptability of violence, overcrowding, a lack of decision making ability, and women's risk during collection of firewood.¹⁴³ Violence against women is widespread and pervasive in Dadaab in Kenya and includes high rates of early and forced marriages as well as psychological, physical, and sexual violence. Research by

the International Organization for Migration in the East and Horn of Africa has found that women and children are also more vulnerable to human trafficking during conflict.¹⁴⁴

Health issues. Health risks associated with GBV, such as HIV/AIDS, STIs, CEFM, and unplanned and early pregnancy, are often exacerbated during times of conflict, as women experience added difficulties in accessing health care. Health services deteriorate due to violence, and many services are either unavailable or inadequate during flight or in IDP/refugee camps. GBV experienced during conflict also has long-lasting psychosocial effects on survivors.

Post-conflict effects. Women survivors of conflict-related sexual assault often face rejection from their society and often their husbands, who call them “wives of soldiers” and view them as having less value, making it hard to reintegrate into their communities post-conflict.¹⁴⁵ In addition, post-conflict periods often see a rise in domestic violence, due to the lingering effects of men’s participation in violent acts during wartime. In South Sudan, for example, GBV, including rape, CEFM, and domestic violence were rampant during the conflict and became a way of life—so that even after the peace agreements were signed, violence continues against women and girls.¹⁴⁶

Recommendations

Preserving gains and addressing gender norms

Peacebuilding efforts need to capitalize on opportunities created by shifting gender roles, to promote further opportunities for women and men. While gender roles can change due to conflict, the values attached to gender identities persist. For example, while increased numbers of women are acting as de facto and de jure heads of household as a result of conflict, they are not accorded the same recognition, value, or benefits as men in the same role. Many women who become heads of households still encounter limited access to property (including land and livestock), health care, and education. While women in Somalia have adopted new roles within households, change is less evident in the public sphere, where women have not gained membership in the community and clan institutions involved in decision-making. Finally, newly established gains may be diminished as men seek to regain the pre-war status quo. Conflict and post-conflict programming needs to promote deeper change to gender norms and roles.

Promoting women’s role in peace-building

Women have generally been excluded from major peace-building talks and negotiations in the region. This has significant ramifications for regional peacebuilding efforts, as women’s engagement in peacebuilding and conflict mitigation processes is necessary both for a more inclusive society and for more sustainable peace processes.¹⁴⁷ According to key informants, women’s grassroots peace groups have been effective at the community level and should be brought into larger arenas of peace discussions. For example, despite being largely excluded from the formal negotiations, Somali women were active in community-based Somali peace-building, bridging clan divisions and opening channels for dialogue. Women peace-makers at all levels should be provided training in peace-building, negotiation, and conflict management.

In Uganda, the women’s peace movement is relatively advanced and well-articulated. Through a highly organized network, women are able to share experiences and offer conflict resolution training as well as trauma counseling for family and community disputes. East Africa could benefit from a women’s regional peace initiative based on Uganda’s model.¹⁴⁸ In addition to peace-building activities at the local level—

forming or joining community organizations to promote reconciliation, reintegration and regeneration—women have also played a direct role in negotiations for a settlement.¹⁴⁹

Inclusive community-led peacebuilding

Conflict management is addressed by USAID through support to intergovernmental agencies such as IGAD, EAC, and COMESA, as well as through USAID programs like PEACE III. Key informants indicated that community-led peace-building efforts have often been successful when members of conflict-prone communities, including both men and women, are brought together to address ways to mitigate conflict *before* it escalates. While these efforts are effective, they lack funding to sustain their efforts. Such efforts should be formalized and scaled. However, if customary governance systems are used to promote peace-building within communities, it is important to ensure that they are not simultaneously promoting harmful customary practices that might impede women’s rights, including GBV and property and inheritance barriers.

Gender Spotlight

As a result of gender dynamics and inequalities, women in East Africa have specific needs and priorities. In most cases, their particular needs, perspectives, and priorities will not receive sufficient resources and attention until women are represented more fully in community, local, national, and international decision making bodies and processes.

Programming for men

One needed approach to reintegration is to provide economic and social opportunities for men to express masculinities in ways that are not socially and politically destructive.¹⁵⁰ Organizations such as Promundo have been successful in engaging men in the DRC and Rwanda to look at the harmful effects of traditional masculinity. Additionally, psychosocial care and reflective counseling efforts should be made to promote mental health.

GOVERNANCE

Summary

Most East African countries have laws that explicitly address gender. Rwanda, for example, has a notably gender-sensitive constitution, and legislators continue to push for laws that increase and promote women’s rights.¹⁵¹ While Somalia’s draft constitution does not address gender, the government drafted a gender policy in 2013 and is working with UN Women to write an action plan and build capacity for the plan’s implementation.

While there have been some significant gains in developing regional and national gender policies, as well as increased numbers of women elected and appointed to governance positions, governance remains largely male-dominated throughout East Africa. This gap has critical implications for multi-sectoral development across the region. Both key informant interviews and literature review findings indicate that, while gender-sensitive laws and policies and women’s representation in government bodies are critical steps, they often do not translate into meaningful change on the ground. Often, gender laws are not followed or even understood in rural and remote communities, and they may not be enforced by police and courts. In practice, cultural practices and traditional laws take precedence over constitutional rights and protections. For example, interviewees from USAID/Rwanda indicated that while Rwanda has

made great strides in introducing equitable policies and laws, including an inheritance law that promotes equal land rights, customary law often prevails, and the Abunzi (community conflict negotiators) often ignore the law in settling land disputes.

Findings

Women in governance roles

The governance sector showed the greatest variation across the region. In some countries, like Rwanda and Kenya, USAID reports note that women are well represented in the political sphere and have representation in local and national government bodies.¹⁵² For example, Rwanda's Constitution promotes gender equality and "requires women to hold at least 30 percent of decision-making positions" in the government; today, 64 percent of Rwanda's parliament members are female.¹⁵³ In other countries, like Somalia or South Sudan, women are underrepresented in decision-making bodies and generally lack the education and skills to serve in those positions.¹⁵⁴ Only 13.8 percent of Somali national parliamentarians are women; representation of women is even lower in Somaliland and Puntland, at 3.0 percent and 2.4 percent respectively.¹⁵⁵

Quota systems. The literature review and key informant interviews recommend (1) establishing quota systems or affirmative action systems to promote women's participation in government bodies, and (2) removing education or skills requirements that keep women from filling leadership roles. USAID reports from 2011, 2012, and 2014 recognize the quota systems of Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda (respectively) as key to the success of women's political participation.¹⁵⁶

Lack of education and training. Women's lack of education and lack of authority or power within communities were commonly cited constraints that keep women from playing a more active role in governance. A 2010 USAID gender assessment of Southern Sudan noted that although 25 percent of government jobs are reserved for women, without appropriate training and education, women cannot serve in those positions. Women are hampered by low literacy levels that prevent them from comprehending political campaigns or technical government processes.¹⁵⁷ Civic education is very limited for both men and women, and they are not taught the importance of civic participation and the complexities of running for office. Additionally, women are constrained by lack of access to resources for financing a political campaign.

Traditional gender roles and norms. Traditional beliefs and gender roles promote women's rightful place in the home and limit women's ability to engage in decision-making at all levels, presenting another barrier to women's participation in governance.¹⁵⁸ Such norms can prevent women from considering governance roles and prevent women and men from voting for or nominating women for such roles. Cultural beliefs about gender roles limit the opportunities for women to be taken seriously and judged based on their policies and campaigns. With regard to civic participation, women have experienced intimidation from their spouses, preventing them from accessing campaign information and voting in elections.¹⁵⁹

Additionally, women leaders often encounter stigma and bias when they are elected or appointed to governance positions. A study on women's political leadership in Uganda reports that women were criticized for wanting to run for political leadership positions, as immoral, greedy, unruly, and wanting to be like men.¹⁶⁰ Although the representation of Ugandan women in the political sphere has significantly

improved, these types of cultural beliefs present a significant barrier in other East African countries. Throughout the region, women who choose to run for office and represent their communities face challenges that their male colleagues do not experience.

Recommendations

Women's role in political parties

There is a key gap in gender equality in political parties with regard to women's equal access to party leadership positions. Several East African countries, including Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda, have passed affirmative action measures to increase women's participation and representation in government and public service. However, there is little information regarding the role of political parties in engaging and supporting women in governance.¹⁶¹

Training and skill-building

This study found a general awareness throughout the region of the benefits of women's participation in peace and reconciliation processes and political office, but no mechanisms to ensure that women's participation is meaningful. There is no barometer available to determine whether women in leadership positions have the skills needed to participate meaningfully—and the self-confidence to break from cultural norms and traditional gender roles to engage fully in leadership roles. Furthermore, women elected through quotas are sometimes less qualified than their male peers, hindering their ability to participate and undermining their governance role.

Women in governance positions and leadership roles require dedicated training to promote their effectiveness. Trainings should include modules on gender dynamics and constraints, decision-making and forms of power, government advocacy, women's legal rights, collective action, persuasive communication and public speaking, and leadership skills. They should also provide an opportunity for peer support and networking with other female leaders.

Case Study: UN Women Programming in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, UN Women uses a two-part approach to achieve a higher representation of women in the political sphere: first, by strengthening women's leadership in agribusiness and politics; and second, by monitoring accountability mechanisms, to track gender equality commitments and progress. Trainings not only inform women how to reach leadership roles in government and represent their interests, but also discuss campaign funding. Greater participation in agribusiness has increased women's participation in agriculture and trade, while improving their socioeconomic standing to run for political positions.

Promoting role models

The existence of female role models who have broken gender barriers and succeeded as government leaders demonstrates to other women that roles in governance are realistic and achievable. It also creates potential for changing the perceptions held by men and entire communities and sectors about women's potential and abilities. There is great potential to build on successes in Rwanda, Kenya, and Ethiopia, and promote concrete examples of successful women leaders throughout the East African region.

Addressing norms

Additionally, while quotas and affirmative action systems allow women to be a part of decision-making bodies, they do not address the underlying gender roles and conceptions that have prevented women from serving in those positions, nor do they ensure that male government officials will take seriously women holding government positions. It is therefore important to promote attitudinal change about women's role in decision making and governance, highlighting how women's engagement in politics adds a necessary perspective to the political discourse.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the gender analysis revealed common gaps and challenges across sectors and countries. The recommendations below aim to address these priority issues of regional concern, including:

- Lack of institutional technical capacity on gender within USAID (regional and country-level) and regional partner organizations;
- Challenges in translating policies and ideas into practice;
- Gaps in programming that meaningfully addresses gender issues;
- Need to deepen understanding and analysis of gender, including its connection to power.

Institutional

In order to strengthen institutional technical capacity around gender at both a regional and country level, it is recommended that USAID/KEA:

1. Create a Gender Advisor position for each USAID country mission (where it doesn't already exist) to support key sectors; recruit for positions accordingly.
 - a. Work directly with sectors and project staff to develop clear strategies for integrating gender and follow-up on challenges and progress.
 - b. Create an implement plan for deepening understanding and analysis of gender and helping people to connect with the issue within USAID
2. Recruit for a Regional Gender Advisor to develop and oversee a USAID Regional Strategy for Gender Integration and provide technical support to country and project Gender Advisors.
 - a. Within the strategy, articulate the specific roles and actions that USAID can take to help integrate gender effectively into its projects.
 - b. Conduct monthly check-in meetings with each country and project Gender Advisor to discuss strategies and progress around integrating gender into projects.
 - c. Convene quarterly meetings of all country/project Gender Advisors to review progress, discuss common challenges and identify ways to address them.
 - d. Lead ongoing efforts to deepen understanding and analysis of gender and help people to connect with the issue within USAID
3. Include gender integration and women's empowerment as a clear requirement in all USAID/KEA solicitations, with gender considerations included in technical, instructions to offerors, evaluation criteria, and key personnel sections. USAID/KEA should evaluate proposals accordingly, ensuring that gender approaches are discussed in technical approaches, with clear personnel and funding allocated toward the implementation of these activities.

4. Invest in capacity-strengthening (including training, onsite training, mentoring and support) of program officers within USAID and regional partners around power and gender in order to institutionalize responsibility for gender across sectors, not just with Gender Advisors.
 - a. Utilize technical expertise of Gender Advisors and USAID global, and draw upon external support as needed.
 - b. Use exercises and techniques that help staff to identify, analyze, and connect with gender issues within their sectors.
 - c. Create clear gender capacity-strengthening plans at both regional and country levels.
 - d. Conduct strategizing sessions with each sector around gender integration and provide follow up support.
5. Connect with global USAID gender bodies for support in strengthening gender capacity, analysis and integration within the region (including accessing training materials, technical assistance, technical resources, etc.).
6. Require each USAID-funded project to have a Gender Advisor on staff and allocate funds to support this.
7. Review the gender analyses required for all USAID-funded programs to ensure that they include relevant, actionable recommendations and monitor progress in implementing.

To help translate policies and ideas into practical action, it is recommended that USAID KEA, in partnership with IGAD, EAC, and COMESA:

8. Examine the existing gender policy framework/structures under the RIGOs, to illustrate the extent to which these contribute or hamper the process of gender equality in the EAC, IGAD, COMESA. Work with RIGOs to improve develop and align clear gender action plans and accountability mechanisms with gender policies.
9. Separate gender funds from program funds in RIGOs to ensure that gender departments start to take control and are held accountable for gender interventions within member states.
10. Provide technical assistance to the various departments of RIGOs as well as the gender department.
 - a. Create clear plans for provision of TA, including key TA functions and activities, focal points and lines of responsibility, schedule of check-ins.

In order to deepen understanding and analysis of gender, including its connection to power, it is recommended that USAID KEA:

11. Review USAID gender training materials and resources and make sure that they include the latest thinking around gender, power and social justice.
 - a. Introduce language of power and social justice to help move beyond the buzzword of “gender” and ground work in a deeper analysis.
 - b. Draw upon resources from the field deepen analysis of gender and have proven effective

12. Develop and implement other means of capacity-strengthening around gender beyond training such as personal reflection exercises, group article reading and review, short staff development exercises, one-on-one discussions, including gender as an agenda item in meetings, etc.)
13. Focus greater attention in capacity-strengthening exercises on building a personal connection to the issue of gender (power and social justice) amongst staff.
 - a. Include behaviors and actions affect other people, on different dimensions: sexuality, gender, etc.

Programmatic Recommendations

In order to strengthen programming to meaningfully integrate gender, it is recommended that USAID KEA:

14. Promote community-led programming that is scaled across countries by reviewing successful approaches in the region, sharing them with partners, encouraging community-led interventions in proposals, and supporting relevant program design.
15. Fund social enterprises that focus on specific needs of women and girls in sectors where this has not traditionally been a focus such as trade and economic growth.
16. Issue calls and funding for programs that address the specific needs of adolescent girls, as a group who tend to “fall through the cracks.”
17. Review data collection needs and determine the types of data that would be most valuable to collect in order to understand the gendered dimensions of different development sectors.
18. Encourage programming that takes an inclusive approach to engaging communities—including women/girl and men/boys—to address gender-power imbalances and empower women and girls.
 - a. Review partner program approaches to ensure that they consider power imbalances between men and women and don’t inadvertently perpetuate harmful social norms or cause further harm to women/girls.
19. Allocate funds and technical leadership for capacity-strengthening activities with sub-grantees and implementing partners.
 - a. Include commitment to capacity-strengthening activities within partnership agreements.
 - b. Create clear plans for capacity-strengthening and make mutual commitments.
 - c. Encourage deeper analysis and personal connection to the issue as highlighted above, in capacity-strengthening exercises.

CONCLUSIONS

Gender equality and women's empowerment is a critical element in supporting resilience, regional integration, and peace, for sustainable development in the East Africa region. Social, economic, and political systems that disadvantage women contribute to adverse outcomes for entire communities and countries—especially in the context of cultural pressures that tend to direct men's energies into non-productive channels. In such contexts, women, by default, serve as the focal point for families' health and economic well-being, while they lack decision making authority and property rights needed to support their efforts.

Such systems can evolve over time, as has happened historically around the globe. However, the East African region faces urgent challenges—economic, environmental, and political—that indicate the need for more rapid change. Steps to integrate gender re-balance into development programming, far from being a secondary concern, will be critical in supporting economic gains and wider political cooperation across the region.

ANNEX A: INTERVIEWS

The contents of this annex have been removed due to the identifiable information of stakeholders consulted for this project.

ANNEX B: RECOMMENDATIONS AND EVIDENCE MATRIX

USAID/KEA GENDER ANALYSIS REPORT			
GENERAL			
RECOMMENDATIONS	EVIDENCE	OPERATIONAL UNITS	TIMELINE
<p>Create a Gender Advisor position for each USAID country mission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit a Regional Gender Advisor Invest in capacity-strengthening for program officers. Connect with global USAID gender bodies for support. 	<p>Multiple Stakeholder Interviews: Lack of institutional technical capacity on gender within USAID regional and country missions.</p>	<p>USAID/KEA</p>	<p>HIGH PRIORITY: Long-term</p>
<p>Require USAID-funded projects to have a Gender Advisor on staff and allocate funds for this.</p>	<p>Multiple Stakeholders Interviews— Particularly IGAD: Lack of institution technical capacity on gender within USAID regional implementing partners</p>	<p>USAID Country Missions</p>	<p>Long-term</p>
<p>Require gender integration and women’s empowerment in all solicitations, with gender considerations in technical instructions to offerors, evaluation criteria, and key personnel sections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> USAID/KEA should evaluate proposals that ensure gender approaches are discussed with clear personnel and funding 	<p>Stakeholder Interview</p>	<p>USAID/KEA and USAID Country Missions</p>	<p>HIGH PRIORITY: Long-term</p>

allocated.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate gender funds from program funds in RIGOs to ensure accountability for gender interventions. 	EAC Focus Group: Lack of translation from policies and ideas into practical action	USAID/KEA and RIGOs	Long-term
<p>Review USAID gender training materials and resources to educate non-gender department staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement other means of capacity-strengthening around gender. 	EAC Focus Group: Lack of understanding and analysis of gender as a concept and program	USAID/KEA	HIGH PRIORITY: Long-term
<p>Promote community-led programming across countries by reviewing successful approaches in the region, sharing them with partners, & encouraging community-led interventions in proposals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review data collection needs and determine the types of data that would be most valuable to collect to understand gendered dimensions of development. 	Multiple Stakeholder Interviews: USAID programming needs to strengthen its gender component	USAID/KEA	HIGH PRIORITY: Long-term
TRADE			
RECOMMENDATIONS	EVIDENCE	OPERATIONAL UNITS	TIMELINE
Governments and regional bodies should continue to invest in gender analysis and technical expertise to inform trade policies and practices.	Stakeholder Interview	Governments and RIGOs	Long-term

Programs are needed to support women's engagement in the formal trade sector for such products as sorghum and beans.	Feed the Future, 2015, "Feed the Future East Africa Food Security Through Enhanced Regional Trade Project: Quarter I Report Documenting Achievements of Milestone Two which includes; Project Staffing, Development of Strategic Plan, Internal Policy Revisions and Organizational Capacity Assessment."	USAID/KEA	Long-term
Targeted activities are needed to address information gaps among women traders and to uphold standards for regional border agents.	Stakeholder interview from Trade Mark East Africa	Regional Implementing Partners	Short-term
Continue support for programs that address border harassment.	Multiple Stakeholder Interviews	USAID/KEA and Implementing Partners	Long-Term
Research should be conducted on how the EAC is addressing corruption of border officials and harassment of traders and to develop better policies and procedures.	Masinjila, 2009, <i>Zambia Feed the Future Gender Assessment</i> .	USAID/KEA	Short-term
Explore the impact of mobile money and computer/Internet services on transparency of border procedures.	USAID, 2012	USAID/KEA	Long-term

AGRICULTURE

RECOMMENDATIONS	EVIDENCE	OPERATIONAL UNITS	TIMELINE
Gender analysis and considerations must be incorporated into all agriculture planning, investment, and implementation.	Multiple Stakeholder Interviews	USAID/KEA, USAID Country Missions, and RIGOs	Long-term

Increase women's productivity by promoting labor-saving technologies on farms or at home.	Buehren, Goldstein, Gulati, et al., 2015	USAID/KEA, USAID Country Missions, and Implementing Partners	Long-term
Train women farmers on innovative agricultural techniques, & educate them on legal land ownership rights.	Olson, Rubin, Wangui, 2010; Buehren, Goldstein, Gulati, et al., 2015; USAID Uganda, 2014	USAID/KEA, USAID Country Missions, and Implementing Partners	Long-term
Design financial products to meet the needs of women farmers, and how they can be profitable.	Buehren, Goldstein, Gulati, et al., 2015	USAID/KEA, USAID Country Missions, and Implementing Partners	Long-term
Promote investment in women-dominated value chains for products that offer high nutritional value.	Multiple Stakeholder Interviews	USAID/KEA, USAID Country Missions and RIGOs	Long-term
Promote women's participation in all efforts to promote climate-smart agriculture in the region.	Buehren, Goldstein, Gulati, et al., 2015	USAID/KEA and RIGOs	Long-term
Strengthen women's cooperatives and networks and their participation in male-dominated cooperatives.	United Peasant of Tanzania funded by the ILO COOPAFRICA-UN Joint Programme Challenge Fund	USAID/KEA and USAID Country Missions	Long-term
Integrate women into existing value chains.	USAID, 2011, FIELD Report No. xx: Behavior Change Perspectives on Gender and Value Chain Development	USAID/KEA, Implementing Partners, and USAID Country Missions	Long-term
Integrate risk-mitigation strategies into all agriculture and food security interventions.	USAID/Kenya's 2012 Gender Analysis and Action Plan (integrated GBV prevention and response measures)	USAID KEA, USAID Country Missions, and RIGOs	Long-term
Develop programs that address the specific needs of adolescent girls.	USAID funded regional programs: DREAMS, Let Girls Learn, and PAMOJA TWALEE	USAID/KEA	Long-term

ENVIRONMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS	EVIDENCE	OPERATIONAL UNITS	TIMELINE
Conduct research to understand how gender dynamics relate to resilience programming; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage women to hear their perspectives and about the impacts of environmental issues on their day-to-day lives. 	Mary Nyasimi, Ruth Aura, Maria Phiri, Catherine Mungai, 2015, "Engendering climate smart agricultural Innovations in East Africa"	Implementing partners and USAID/KEA	Short-term Long-term
Women's input should be included in any relevant programs.	Stakeholder Interview	USAID/KEA and Implementing Partners	Long-term
Build women's capacity in natural resource management (especially water conservation), environmental protection, and disaster risk reduction and recovery.	Stakeholder Interview	Implementing Partners	Long-term
Provide institutional and financial support to smallholders to support climate-smart agriculture technologies.	COMESA, 2011	USAID/KEA, USAID Country Missions and Implementing Partners	Short-term
Establish systems for managing information on gender and the environment, particularly climate change; ensure women's access to environmental information.	Stakeholder Interview	USAID/KEA and RIGOs	Short-term
Environmental programs should integrate gender analysis into their strategies and connect with programs that aim to transform social norms.	COMESA, 2011	USAID/KEA and Implementing Partners	Long-term

Protect the safety and security of women in areas such as firewood and water collection and cooking safety.	Olson, Rubin, Wangui, 2010; Franworth, Akamandisa, Hichaambwa, 2011; COMESA, 2011.	Government and RIGOs	Long-term
Develop links between conflict management and environmental strategies.	Stakeholder Interview	USAID/KEA and RIGOs	Long-term
Bring together women from across East Africa who face similar challenges related to climate change, to share approaches to adaptation and mitigation.	Stakeholder Interview	USAID/KEA	Short-term

HEALTH

RECOMMENDATIONS	EVIDENCE	OPERATIONAL UNITS	TIMELINE
Develop programs that examine how gender power dynamics affect women's health and explore steps to help balance power in accessing healthcare.	Stakeholder interview	USAID/KEA	Long-term
Develop programs that address and build awareness on the link between GBV and HIV/AIDS.	WHO, 2010, Addressing violence against women and HIV/AIDS: What works?	USAID/KEA and RIGOs	Long-term
Research the roles of women and men in relation to access to healthcare and control of health systems.	Demographic Health Surveys provided very limited data.	USAID/KEA and USAID Country Missions	Short-term
Develop programs that empower communities to take decisions for their own welfare with sustainable approaches.	FHi 360 ROADS project	USAID Country Missions and Implementing Partners	Long-term

CONFLICT

RECOMMENDATIONS	EVIDENCE	OPERATIONAL UNITS	TIMELINE
Capitalize peacebuilding efforts on opportunities created by shifting gender roles, to promote further opportunities for women and men	Stakeholder Interview	RIGOs and Governments	Long-term
Focus conflict and post-conflict programming to promote progressive gender norms and roles.	World Bank, 2004, Post-Conflict Peace Building in Africa: The Challenges of Socio-Economic Recovery and Development	USAID/KEA, RIGOs, and Implementing Partners	Long-term
Provide economic and social opportunities for men to express masculinities in less destructive ways. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide psychosocial care and reflective counseling efforts to promote mental health. 	Stakeholder Interviews	USAID/KEA and Implementing Partners	Long-term

GOVERNANCE

RECOMMENDATIONS	EVIDENCE	OPERATIONAL UNITS	TIMELINE
Examine the gap in gender equality in political parties, to support women's equal access to party leadership positions.	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2013, "Women's Political Leadership in East Africa with Specific Reference to Uganda."	USAID/KEA and USAID Country Missions	Short-term

Provide dedicated training to women in governance positions and leadership roles, to promote their effectiveness; provide an opportunity for peer support and networking with other female leaders.	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2013, “Women’s Political Leadership in East Africa with Specific Reference to Uganda.”	Implementing Partners, USAID Country Missions, RIGOs, and USAID/KEA	Long-term
Promote specific examples of successful women leaders throughout the East African region.	Stakeholder Interview	USAID/KEA and RIGOs	Short-term
Promote attitudinal change about women’s role in decision making and governance, highlighting how women’s engagement in politics adds a necessary perspective to the political discourse.	IGAD, 2013, <i>Attaining the Fifty Percent Target! Regional Strategy for Higher Representation of Women in Decision-Making Positions</i>	USAID/KEA, USAID Country Missions, Implementing Partners, and RIGOs	Long-term

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