



ULTRA-POOR PASTORAL WOMEN AS PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**End of Project Report to the Climate Justice Resilience Fund
The BOMA Project
March 2022**

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

CFA	Community Forest Associations
CJRF	Climate Justice Resilience Fund
EMC	Environmental management committees
EMCA	Environmental Management and Coordination Act
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IGA	Income-generating activity
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
KWTA	Kenya Water Tower Agencies
LNA	Learning Needs Assessment
NDMA	National Drought Management Authority
NGO	Nongovernmental Organizations
NRM	Natural resource management
NRT	Northern Rangeland Trust
PFS	Pastoralist field school
PRM	Participatory Rangeland Management
REAP	Rural Entrepreneurship Access Project
SEC	Samburu Ecosystem Conservator
WRUA	Water Resources User Association
WUA	Water User Associations

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BOMA's *Ultra-Poor Pastoral Women as Partners in Community-Based Natural Resource Management Project* (or Green REAP) aims to amplify pastoral women's influence on local NRM policy and practice to build climate resilience capacities in Samburu County, Kenya. The project ran for 36 months starting August 2019 and enrolled 2,100 BOMA women participants in a push-and-pull approach that combined REAP with interventions that address the gaps that undermine the women's capacity and role in the planning, utilization and management of natural resources. REAP is BOMA's data-driven, high-impact poverty graduation program. This end-of-project report covers achievements from August 2019 to March 2022. Findings of an endline survey undertaken in February-March 2022 are included in the report.

Forty-eight BOMA staff learned the fundamentals of climate change and adaptation and principles of NRM through capacity development. Properly equipped with climate change and NRM knowledge and skills, the BOMA staff conducted trainings that helped women participants shift their mindsets and attitude towards conservation, management, and sustainable use of natural resources within the area of operation. With this, 90% of REAP participants took an active role in NRM activities and established alternative IGAs, (Endline Survey Report – 2022). The participants established nature-based enterprises including tree nursery enterprise, beekeeping, ecotourism, forage production and bulking, artisanal mining, and wood forest products and aloe production.

The localized training and NRM messaging reached 1,089 REAP participants across the target location in Samburu Central and East. Capacity development interventions for NRM committees reactivated the membership and registration drive, enabling NRM committees increasing its membership base from 404 to 1,050 with 90% of the REAP participants officially registered as members, taking, and actively participating in management committee leadership positions. By the end of the Project, there were 13 NRM committees and other NRM user rights groups spread across Samburu Central and East. Most of the REAP participants are subscribed to and are members of CFAs and WRUAs.

Through the project, women had more say on NRM issues, traditional laws and practices, and exclusion of women from committees (such as traditional grazing plans), structures governing water points and forests, policy formulation, and sustainable resource harvesting. Women are now part of security personnel, serving as forest guards in Naramat CFA in Samburu Central, and are participating in reviewing resource use plans, sub-catchment management plans, and other strategies. Two resource use plans were initiated for CFAs (Naramat, Nailepunye) and two for the WRUAs in Samburu Central and East (Nkarro and Nkurra).

The endline survey showed an impressive number of participants meeting the poverty graduation criteria:

- % of women graduates reporting a 25% increase of productive asset base and business value from the original cash transfer: **98.5%**
- % of eligible primary school-aged girls attending primary school: **94%**
- % of participants reporting that no child went to bed hungry in the past month: **97.5%**
- % of participants reporting that household members had two meals a day: **98%**
- % of participants reporting that households are food secure: **97.5%**
- % of participants reporting that households have multiple income sources and saving options: **97.5%**

The project, however, faced some constraints, including severe implementation delays due to cyclical COVID-19 restrictions on movement and public gatherings. Cultural perceptions of women in Samburu also inhibited and continue to hold back women's involvement in NRM. In our attempts to influence change in these

dynamics, BOMA and our partners involved both men and women in planning, decision-making, and adoption of PFS' approach of disseminating NRM information.

II. Progress Summary

Progress to-date toward objectives and expected outcomes (Table 2)

Objective 1: Increase BOMA's capacity to embed best practice NRM and climate resilience learning in its programs.

Expected Outcomes:

- 1.1 Project learning leveraged to strengthen climate resilience approaches throughout BOMA programming and inform improved NRM practices in Northern Kenya.
- 1.2 BOMA programs help reduce participant vulnerability by building absorptive resilience capacities.

Indicators:

1. BOMA staff can effectively communicate improved NRM techniques to women and facilitate NRM group access to information and training.
2. BOMA integrates a climate resilience capacities lens into all REAP programs and its default training recommendations for its technical assistance clients

Progress Summary

Progress in indicator 1

BOMA equipped five Field Officers, 24 Mentors, and 19 technical staff with knowledge and skills on fundamentals of climate change and NRM adaptation and principles, enabling them to effectively champion climate justice, conservation, women's rights, and support of climate resilient livelihoods while applying their knowledge in implementing REAP.

With their acquired knowledge, BOMA staff helped women participants change their mindsets on conservation, management, and sustainable use of natural resources within the project area. BOMA Mentors and Field Officers incorporated NRM messaging during business mentorship and coaching sessions. As a result, women participants are more willing to acquire knowledge and skills, and ready to change traditional practices by demonstrating and adopting in their REAP businesses and other livelihoods NRM best practices that support climate change adaptation and resilience. Women explored options for livelihood diversification instead of relying on one stream of income. REAP participants also adopted alternative forms of energy such as solar (instead of wood fuel) for lighting which contributes not only in saving the environment but also in improving household health. Wood fuel emits carbon monoxide through smoke which can lead to respiratory and eye problems which can be especially harmful for children using it to study at night.

The project's endline survey indicated that 90% of REAP participants took an active role in NRM activities and established alternative IGAs. Understanding different ways of utilizing land, land resources and other resources sustainably not only boosted REAP income streams. It also led to the establishment of nature-based enterprises including tree nursery enterprise, beekeeping, ecotourism, forage production and bulking, artisanal mining, and wood forest products and aloe production. Through the training, the women also learned and adopted the 3Rs of global environmental culture (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) by reusing and recycling plastic and carrier bags and reducing other plastic wastes to minimize pollution which contributes to a cleaner and healthier environment.

Progress in indicator 2

In partnership with Samburu and informed by the LNA findings, BOMA developed and rolled out NRM modules with REAP participants. The nine sessions covered the following topics: understanding rangelands resources and management; understanding effects of drought; understanding how to prepare for drought; what women can do to save and protect the rangelands; the role of women and institutionalization of natural resources governance; defining weather, climate, and climate change; understanding climate change adaptation and mitigation; women and climate change and what women can do to respond to climate change. A total of 71 sessions were conducted, reaching 1,089 REAP participants across the target locations. Using radio and IVR technology, the NRM themes were embedded in BOMA's remote messaging promoting climate resilience, involvement of women and youth in NRM, and mitigation of climate change's effects on participants.

BOMA tested and refined the use of radio and IVR as we adapted to COVID-19 restrictions. Both enabled BOMA to reinforce and complement dissemination of key messages with participants when in-person mentorship was interrupted. Despite the

disruption of face-to- visits, BOMA women remained willing and ready to learn new skills, knowledge, and practices such as the adoption and applicability of best practices in NRM and climate resilience. The engagement was particularly important and provided the required pivot in change of practices as envisioned in project goals.

Objective 2: Increase the capacity of 2,100 BOMA women to influence NRM policy and gain access to climate, NRM and resilience information and services.

Expected Outcomes:

- 2.1 Participants articulate their concerns and needs in BOMA training and influence Government policies to gain information, capacity building and services to meet these needs.
- 2.2 Participants have strengthened adaptive resilience capacities through improved natural resource management (the existence of water user groups, rangeland management groups, groups regulating the collection of firewood and improved NRM in livelihood and household management).
- 2.3 Participant engagement in an improved enabling environment (including governance mechanisms, policies and regulations, cultural and gender norms, community networks, and formal and informal social protection mechanisms) contributes to transformative resilience capacities.

Indicators:

1. 100% increase in community awareness of the policies and practices under the Environment Management and Coordination Act (EMCA) and related management structures in project communities.
2. At least 10 NRM committees (or other community-level decision-making body) established in the 25 project locations in Samburu.
3. At least 5 plans addressing specific NRM concerns initiated by REAP groups in NRM Committee meetings

Progress Summary

Progress in indicator 1

BOMA collaborated with county and national government agencies such as the KFS to improve community awareness of existing conservation and management policies and practices in tourism, bio-cultural villages, curio shops, and wildlife farming. While working with communities living with wildlife, BOMA incentivized wildlife resource conservation and management as a land use option by understanding the sustainable benefits of nature-based enterprises while following procedures, regulations, and standards. To further deepen community awareness and learn practices, BOMA solicited insights and learning, including women's roles in NRM policies and practices and ways to influence policy, from NGOs working on climate resilience and rangeland management structures in Isiolo County. As a result of a learning trip to county government field sites in Isiolo County, the NRM committees acquired information that enabled them to understand best approaches of developing inclusive natural resource management and gender intersection in community-based decision-making. NRM committees used these new learnings to re-engage communities on the registration of new members and the review of resources plans.

In partnership with government technical and extension officers, BOMA carried out 10 community sensitizations on climate resilience and NRM across the targeted location. The mapping of NRM committees and vigorous campaigns encouraged REAP participants who later joined NRM committees. As a result, 1,050 participants voluntarily registered as members in the 13 NRM committees and other NRM user rights groups spread across Samburu Central and East, indicating strong willingness/enthusiasm among REAP participants to be champions on climate resilience and NRM practices in their community. BOMA particularly recognized the importance of the intrinsic drive and personal commitment as key ingredients in driving change especially among pastoralists communities. With almost 50% of targeted REAP participants joining NRM committees, more formidable, informed, and self-driven climate resilient women champions lead efforts towards BOMA's climate adaptation and resilience goals.

Progress in indicator 2

BOMA and the Samburu County government profiled and mapped 13 active NRM committees across the target regions. BOMA facilitated REAP women to be members of various NRM and user rights groups. By project-end, 1,050 women had subscribed and paid for membership cards that give them exclusive access to various critical natural resources within the forest ecosystems. More women expressed interest in joining the existing NRM committees, although registration and renewal fees were perceived as too high for ultra-poor REAP participants. BOMA facilitated the membership of REAP participants who wanted to be

registered into CFAs and negotiated with government agencies for the participants to join NRM committees even after the registration period has closed.

Progress in indicator 3

BOMA convened 10 consultations between NRM committees and REAP women, taking advantage of regular monthly committee meetings to improve women's awareness of existing community NRM structures. The women voiced concerns related to NRM, traditional laws and practices, and women's representation. These include women's exclusion from critical committees (such as traditional grazing plans), structures governing water points and forests, policy formulation, sustainable resource harvesting, potential resource value addition, and access to reliable markets for nature-based products such as honey, gum and other non-wood forest products. Women also said they do not have equal job opportunities in conservation, especially in wildlife and forest scouts.

Continued and regular consultations and advocacy of gender equity and socio-economic inclusion have yielded concrete results. Women now serve as forest guards in Naramat CFA in Samburu Central, express their views through committee representation, and participate in reviewing resource use plans, sub-catchment management plans, and other strategies. Certain plans supported by the NRM officer in partnership with the SEC aim to assist communities (mostly women) to derive sustainable livelihoods from the forest without depleting natural resources. The extraction and sustainable use of dead wood (done mostly by women) was one of the approaches adopted by the CFAs.

In the case of the Naivai community conservancy, the FAO, in partnership with the Department of Natural Resource, Water and Energy, supported the development of a PRM plan that focused on resource rehabilitation interventions such as clearing of invasive plant species that inhibit growth of pastures. Women's role in plan implementation was critical because they were the primary harvester and users of forest water. BOMA continued to work closely with the conservancy's management committee to ensure women's voice and action are considered in day-to-day operationalization of the PRM.

Through the development of resource use plan, one of the CFA (Naramat) based in Samburu Central lobbied for nature-based enterprise production assets that received beehives from the KWTA to be primarily managed by women. The association was linked to Samburu Beekeepers Cooperative society that provided access to ready markets for raw and finished honey, honey by-products and tree seedlings.

Two resource use plans were initiated for CFAs (Naramat, Nailepunye) and two for the WRUAs in Samburu Central and East (Nkarro and Nkurra). Nailepunye, Namnyak and Nkarro CFAs developed resource and afforestation plans that enabled each to establish a mega tree nursery that raised over 100,000 seedlings. As of December 2021, about 40,500 seedlings have been distributed to communities, schools, and private farms. One of the women-led groups based at Naramat CFA was able to market and sell 1,800 assorted tree/fruit seedlings to the community and the KFS.

Objective 3: Empower 2,100 of the poorest women in Samburu County to graduate from extreme poverty, develop more climate-resilient livelihoods, and participate in local NRM.

Expected Outcomes:

- 3.1 Participants have increased absorptive resilience capacities through appropriate coping strategies, participation in saving groups, asset ownership and diversified productive assets that reduce exposure and sensitivity to shocks and stresses of resource depletion and climate change.
- 3.2 Participants build adaptive resilience capacities by developing the ability to make informed choices and diversify livelihoods and other strategies in response to longer-term social, economic, and environmental change.

Indicators:

1. 85% of women have adopted at least one improved NRM and climate resilience practices.
2. 85% of women graduate from extreme poverty based on BOMA's criteria (food security, sustainable livelihood (income, income diversification and savings).

3. 90% of married women have at least an equal say as their husband in household decisions regarding paying for medical expenses, food, and buying and selling her own livestock.
4. 50% increase in REAP participants serving in community leadership roles

Progress Summary

Progress in Indicator 1

The planned 2,100 new REAP participants were enrolled between November and December 2019. Participants have engaged in project NRM activities in parallel to the management and growth of routine livelihood activities of REAP business and savings groups.

According to the endline survey, 90% of REAP participants have championed climate-smart nature-based enterprises and have adopted at least one improved NRM and climate resilience practice. Those in the savings groups have access to credit and loan services to either start and establish potential and viable green enterprises such as tree nurseries, bead making, forage production and making of animal feed blocks.

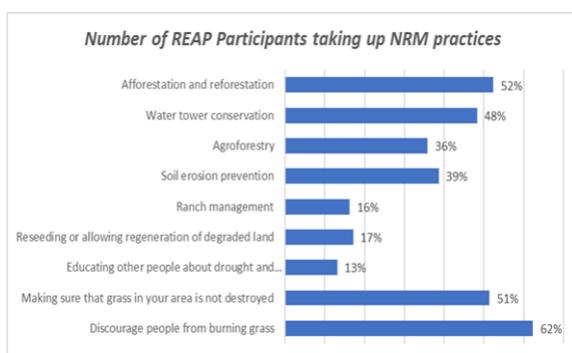


Figure 1: Endline Data-March,2022.

Progress indicator 2:

On average, 98.5 % of women graduates reported a 25% increase in business value; 94% of eligible primary school-aged girls attend school; 97.5% of households said no child has gone to bed hungry in the past month; 98% of household members had two meals a day. In addition, 97.5 % of households are food secure, and 97.5% of households have multiple income sources and savings options.

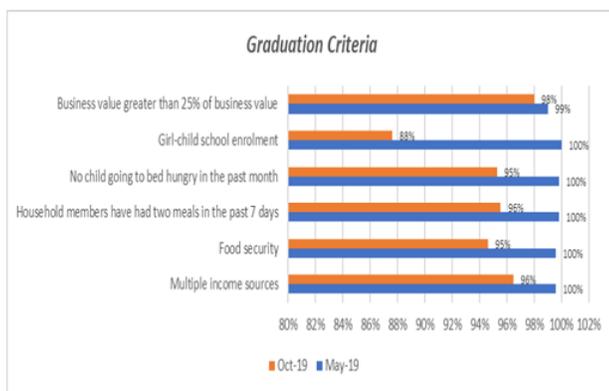


Figure 1: Comparison of May and Oct,2019 Cohort on Graduation Criteria

Progress indicator 3:

On decision making at household level, an average of 80% of married women had an equal say as their husband. Specifically, 99% had a say in making medical decisions for their children, 67% had a say in taking children to school, 89% helped make household livestock decisions and 71% had a say in household purchase decisions. (Endline Survey report - 2022).

Progress indicator 4:

The endline survey also showed that, on average, 53% of REAP participants said they are serving in various community leadership roles. These roles include health committee (1%), relief (1%), environmental committee (4%), water committee (4%), school management committee (6%), church/Mosque (8%), and other committees, including “Nyumba Kumi”¹ security committee, women’s self-help group, people living with disability and CFA committees (11%). Before the project, it was rare to find women participants taking leadership roles in NRM committees. However, BOMA promoted and observed steady uptake of membership in NRM committees, which represents good progress given contextual barriers, especially those related to culture.

III. Risks

(Update on risks and risk mitigation strategies identified by BOMA (Table 3))

Risks	Updates
1. Lack of County Government Cooperation	The Samburu County government seconded a dedicated Technical Officer stationed at BOMA’s office that offered technical support and the required infrastructure through the NDMA and delivered the services envisaged in this program. The county government has co-led all the activities and the Technical Officer ensures input and involvement from the government in design and delivery. The continued commitment by the county government and the NDMA to the project indicated political will to bring about meaningful change in NRM and women’s engagement in the same, during and beyond the life of the project.
2. Climate Change Shocks	Climate change shocks, including recurring drought, flooding, and a historic locust infestation, have led, in some cases, to migration of REAP participants, which interrupted timely implementation of project activities. In the affected areas, this made it difficult to reach more participants with in-person visits, and livelihood activities were interrupted. The Kenyan Government’s response to the infestation was also hampered by COVID-19 restrictions. However, BOMA was able to trace and track participants to their new locations with a few exceptions due to inaccessible locations, insecurity, and poor network coverage.
3. Highly Patriarchal Society	Historically, Northern Kenya’s pastoral nomadic communities share a patriarchal social system where men control financial resources and assets and have greater authority in household decision-making. These entrenched patriarchal norms not only pose significant barriers to women’s ability to own tangible assets and resources such as land, livestock, money, but also continue to rob women and girls of control over decisions that affect them. Through the involvement and inclusion of women in management committees, the perception of women’s roles and influence is changing but there is still male dominance and fear. BOMA in partnership with County NRM and Technical Officers encouraged REAP women to advocate for their concerns through local and elected leaders, despite the barriers.

IV. Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges encountered, lessons learned to date, and any upcoming changes in strategy/ activities.

Challenges

The main challenges the project has faced include:

- Severe delay of implementation due to cyclical restrictions on movement and public gatherings related to the COVID-19 pandemic. To mitigate the challenges of COVID-19, BOMA tested and refined the use of radio and IVR with participants as part of its adaptation to COVID-19 restrictions. In remote villages, BOMA Mentors shared the Ministry of Health guidance on COVID-19 on hygiene and disease prevention measures. During the meeting after de-escalation of COVID-19 measures, BOMA adhered to the Ministry of Health COVID-19 containment measures and protocol. Each group trained did not

¹ . The “Nyumba Kumi” is a community-led security initiative introduced by government.

exceed 10 participants per session. The meeting and training ensured social distancing, and Mentors emphasized wearing of masks and sanitization.

- Cultural perceptions of women in Samburu have inhibited and continue to hold back women's involvement in natural resource management. In its attempts to influence change in these dynamics, BOMA and its partners have adopted a participatory approach which involves both men and women in planning, decision-making, and adoption of pastoralist field schools' approach of disseminating natural information.
- Inadequate knowledge and skills by NRM committees to manage their activities and land tenure systems that are purely communal with quickly depleting resources. This was evident especially in locations that experienced land sub-division and adjudication processes.

Lessons Learned

A. Need for community/government collaboration for effective NRM practices

Effective management of natural resources is a collaborative approach between the community (mostly users) and government. The County government has plans, existing policies, and technical resource-base, but they occasionally lack resources to fully implement NRM plans and policies, fully cascading them to the community level on time. Through partnership between BOMA and relevant government entities, some of the plans and policies had been communicated to NRM committees and, to some extent, other community members including REAP participants. Community members, especially women, were very keen to gain new skills on matters of natural resources, as they are important users of water, forest, and rangeland, which have a deep impact on their daily use of time and energy.

Advocacy Strategies

B. Advocacy strategies at national and county levels

The Samburu County government seconded a dedicated Technical Officer stationed at BOMA's office to offer technical support and the required infrastructure through the NDMA to deliver the services envisaged in this program. The county government has co-led all the activities and the Technical Officer ensures input and involvement from the government in design and delivery. The continued commitment by the county government and the NDMA to the project shows political will to bring about meaningful change in NRM and women's engagement in the same, during and beyond the life of the project. However, the development and implementation of key NRM policies and plans demanded time and resources that had a ripple effect on the dissemination of key messages to the REAP participants and community in general.

During the implementation period, BOMA worked with the County government team, and reviewed and modified the existing plans to encourage the County government to allocate additional resources towards NRM, particularly in supporting extreme poor women build climate-resilient livelihoods. BOMA worked with the NDMA that extended the channels for early warning information and communication to the women and their committees that enabled them adequately to plan their livelihoods. In addition, BOMA with other state and non-state partners facilitated the development of resource-use plans and investment/development plans for NRM committees. Some of the NRM committees' plans were submitted to state agencies, ward, constituency development committees for allocation of development budgets. The government processes and bureaucracies had some impact on implementation of resource use plan especially those NRM committees that required substantial capital investment that solely relied from government agencies and development partners.

C. Integration of climate change into poverty graduation

In addition to drought and flooding, the region has also experienced locust infestations. The Kenyan

Government's response to the infestation was hampered by the restrictions put in place in response to COVID-19. These shocks have led, in some cases, to migration of participants, which interrupted timely implementation of project activities. In the affected areas, this made it difficult to reach REAP participants with in-person visits, and livelihood activities interrupted. However, BOMA has mostly been able to trace participants to their new locations with few exceptions. While some REAP participants were able to resume back to the normal location, other participants had to adopt climate-sensitive businesses to mitigate the impact of climate shocks. Some participants decided to switch businesses to another depending on the season. For example, from Kiosk business owners turn to livestock sale during lean and drought season. BOMA will continue providing specialized trainings to participants to help them diversify their sources of income and remain resilient despite climate shocks.

D. Overcoming pressures and barriers from a highly patriarchal culture

BOMA has been encouraging women to advocate for their concerns through local and elected leaders, despite the barriers. Constant advocacy for gender equity have greatly improved women's representation, especially in perceived highly male dominated society. REAP women taking leadership roles in various local committees including NRM is gaining momentum. BOMA has also promoted and observed steady uptake of membership in NRM committees, which indicated a good breakthrough given contextual barriers, especially those related to socio-cultural dynamics. Despite major progress in terms of the number of REAP participants who were able to air their issues and concerns, there remains an overarching need to embed advocacy at the household level by involving their male counterparts in the different stages of the project so that they are able to better understand the importance of gender equity.