



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



RANGELAND HEALTH ADVOCATES

Restoration of Rangeland Carbon Sinks for Increased Community Climate Resilience and Agricultural Outcomes:

Building a Network of Monitoring and Co-learning Rangeland Restoration Sites

The project focuses directly on addressing key knowledge and capacity gaps to enhance rangeland health monitoring with one key work area focused on building a gender-inclusive community of practice in rangeland health monitoring. These individual profiles of rangeland health advocates reflect on the experiences of women and youth who have been engaged in training, skills development and data collection in their local rangelands.

Name: Leah Raayo Morera (Lioness Rangers)

Age: 24 years



Place of Training:
OCR conservancy, Amboseli

About the Land Degradation Surveillance Framework (LDSF)

The LDSF is a comprehensive method for assessing soil and land health, from the field to the use of new and advanced data analytics. The LDSF provides a consistent set of indicators and field protocols to assess the health of an ecosystem, including vegetation cover and structure, tree, shrub and grass species diversity, current and historic land use, infiltration capacity, soil characteristics and land degradation status.



Which LDSF activities were you engaged in, during the training?

“ **Soil sampling and testing water infiltration testing during the rangeland health module.** ”

What new skills have you learnt through this training? What did you learn in the LDSF?

- I learnt about types of grasses and what they indicate, for example if the area needs manure or not. I also learnt about what grasses animals like and don't like.
- I learnt that topsoil and subsoil contain different amounts of carbon.
- I learnt the environmental implications of high and low infiltration rates.
- I used to wonder what carbon research is about and why the researchers collect soil samples and take them away. I now understand.

How will you use this knowledge?

- **As a ranger, my new knowledge will help in restoration planning, for example what tree species to grow where based on the soil in the area.**
- **I can also now tell how healthy or degraded land is, and what is needed to restore it. I will use this knowledge on my farm.**

How has this training changed/impacted your agency or ideas for future skills building and work in your community?

- **I now want to start my own restoration areas, raise seedlings and make a training centre to teach others. I want to learn more about both annual and perennial grasses, and train farmers and members of other grazing committees.**

What did you enjoy most?

- **I enjoyed rangeland assessment the most because I got to learn more about grasses, including their scientific names.**

How does increased knowledge of land health through trainings like these empower women?

- **These trainings/engagements are an avenue for women to learn and gain new skills. Women who participate learn the importance of conservation, and can apply their learning on their farms. Having a female PhD student in the team was very inspiring. As a ranger, how will you use this knowledge to influence other restoration areas, e.g. the national parks?**
- **I will offer step-by-step training about the importance of restoring different aspects of the environment.**

How will your engagement in the LDSF impact your community?

- **Engaging community members, especially the youth, in the LDSF activities has provided a learning opportunity in addition to a job opportunity for them. This knowledge and experience will be cascaded to the rest of the community.**
- **These engagements have helped create social capital among the community members involved. Most of them did not know each other at the beginning of the field activities, but they now have a sense of community among themselves.**
- **Engaging the youth in these activities has also made communication and sharing of information in the community easier.**

What message do you have for your community leaders on rangeland restoration?

- **Grazing committee leaders need to set a limit on the number of livestock per conservancy to protect the environment and prevent climate change. They also need to plant more trees. Some conservancies are bare and need to be restored.**

Project Contact

Dr Leigh Winowiecki, Soil Scientist,
CIFOR-ICRAF Theme Leader, Soil and Land Health
L.A.Winowiecki@cifor-icraf.org

