



Insight Study

Shifting Knowledge and Attitudes on Gender related to Forest and Landscape Restoration: Insights from Makueni County, Kenya



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<https://www.cifor-icraf.org/nature-based-solution-for-forest-and-landscape-restoration/>



About this Brief

This brief presents the results of a small study that sought to reveal some of the change dynamics resulting from Mbooni Community Forest Association (CFA) members' participation in a two-day training, Breaking Ground: Community Dialogues on Gender and Restoration. This training was delivered under the UK Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions (UK PACT) funded project, "Delivering nature-based solution outcomes by addressing policy, institutional and monitoring gaps in forest and landscape restoration", led by CIFOR-ICRAF in partnership with African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), FAO-Kenya, and the County Government of Makueni, Kenya.

The Study

One of the core outcomes of the "Delivering Nature-based Solution Outcomes by Addressing Policy, Institutional and Monitoring Gaps in Forest and Landscape Restoration" project is to implement gender-transformative, equitable and socially inclusive activities to support land restoration. This study, therefore, sought to find out whether the training has been applied and has led to tangible shifts in practice and attitudes at the household and community level.

Community dialogues

Under the project, CIFOR-ICRAF has developed an innovative approach to building capacity in the use of gender transformative approaches (GTAs) for forest and landscape restoration (FLR): *Breaking Ground: Community dialogues on Gender and Restoration*. This approach involves community dialogues on gender equality and social inclusion (Gender-related issues) and a trainer-of-trainers (ToT) scaling model.

The community dialogues are six activities designed to engage communities in dialogue about how gender perceptions and gender-related constraints and opportunities in their local contexts influence people's ability to engage in FLR. The activities are participatory and inclusive and spark a new way of approaching work and livelihoods that reach beyond the dialogues' scope. A detailed description of the facilitation tools are available in Crossland et al. (2022a).



To implement and scale the use of these community dialogues, the project employs a **Trainer of Trainers (ToT) model**. This model is done in three main phases. The intention is to cascade the gender work in communities by establishing and building capacity amongst a cohort of local peer farmers, government officials, community groups and other local stakeholders. These trainees become trainers of trainers (ToT) who can deliver community dialogue training in their local communities.



PHASE 1**Hold a two-day main workshop to train lead ToTs****PHASE 2****Support lead ToTs to conduct their own local two-day trainings**LOCAL
TWO-DAY
TRAININGLOCAL
TWO-DAY
TRAININGLOCAL
TWO-DAY
TRAININGLOCAL
TWO-DAY
TRAINING**PHASE 3****Hold a one-day reflection workshop with lead ToTs and those trained**

PHASE 1: Involves a two-day training of lead trainer of trainers where CIFOR-ICRAF community facilitators (CFs) train a group of selected lead ToTs (peer farmers, government officials, community groups and other local stakeholders) in how to conduct a community dialogue through a learning-by-doing approach. The Lead ToTs are selected based on their ability to share the knowledge they gain with others in the community and are then supported by the CFs in planning their own 1 or 2-day training in their local communities.

PHASE 2: Involves the Lead ToTs conducting their planned local training with support from CFs. An example of the cascade effect from this model comes from a previous phase of the UK PACT-funded project when 81 participants in Makueni County attended the Lead ToT training (Phase 1) and then scaled the content of the training through events across ten wards, engaging 319 participants to-date (Crossland et al. 2022b).

PHASE 3: Comprises a reflection workshop bringing together Lead ToTs and community members who participated in the local training to reflect on the lessons learned from the gender training and identify opportunities for further scaling. The reflection workshops utilise the How Are We Doing? tool from Sarmiento Barletti et al. (2020).

Working with Mbooni Community Forest Association

- **Community Forests Association (CFA)** are a key element in forest conservation and management as they are formed by communities that live adjacent to forests.
- The **forest adjacent communities** use the forests sustainably to generate income and improve their livelihoods hence easing pressure on the forest areas.
- CFAs are made up of an **executive committee with members elected** to take up the offices of Chairperson, Secretary, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Vice Secretary.
- KFS is supporting such communities in **formation, restructuring and registration of CFAs** in accordance to the Registrar of Societies.



The project is working with the Mbooni Community Forest Association (MBOCOFOA), Makueni County, to increase participation and ownership of FLR activities amongst CFA members and the community at large. Prior to the introduction of the project, community participation in the CFA was low, and many members were inactive. Through their engagement with the project the community has a renewed interest in the CFA and the role of the CFA with FLR in the region. To help support more inclusive and equitable FLR efforts, the project has so far trained over 600 members of the CFA as Gender-related issues ToTs and in the use of community dialogues (inclusive of other stakeholders including county-level and national government officials).

Table 1. Number and gender of those trained across the Mbooni CFA.

COHORT	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
#1 September-October 2023	162	177	339
#2 March-April 2024	123	146	269



Photo: ICRAF/Ann Wavinya

Methodology

To help identify potential shifts in behaviour or attitudes among those trained, a recall methodology was used to understand two points in time: one before the training and one after the training. The same 1-5 Likert scale (1 always lowest and 5 always highest) was used for both questions to identify any shift. These were followed by open ended questions to prompt specific examples that could help illustrate any change between the two answers.

21 respondents (10 females and 11 males) representing all 11 Mbooni CFA blocks¹ were purposefully selected because they trained in September-October 2023 to ensure a range of age groups and status within the CFA were represented. The average age of female and male respondents was 48, with the youngest respondent being 30 and the oldest 71.

Changes in Knowledge and Attitudes

First, respondents were asked about their **knowledge** of gender-related issues before and after training. Before the training, the 21 respondents' average knowledge was **'Low'** with an average score of 2, with little difference between male and female respondents. After the training, average knowledge had increased to **'High'** with an average of 4.3. A slightly

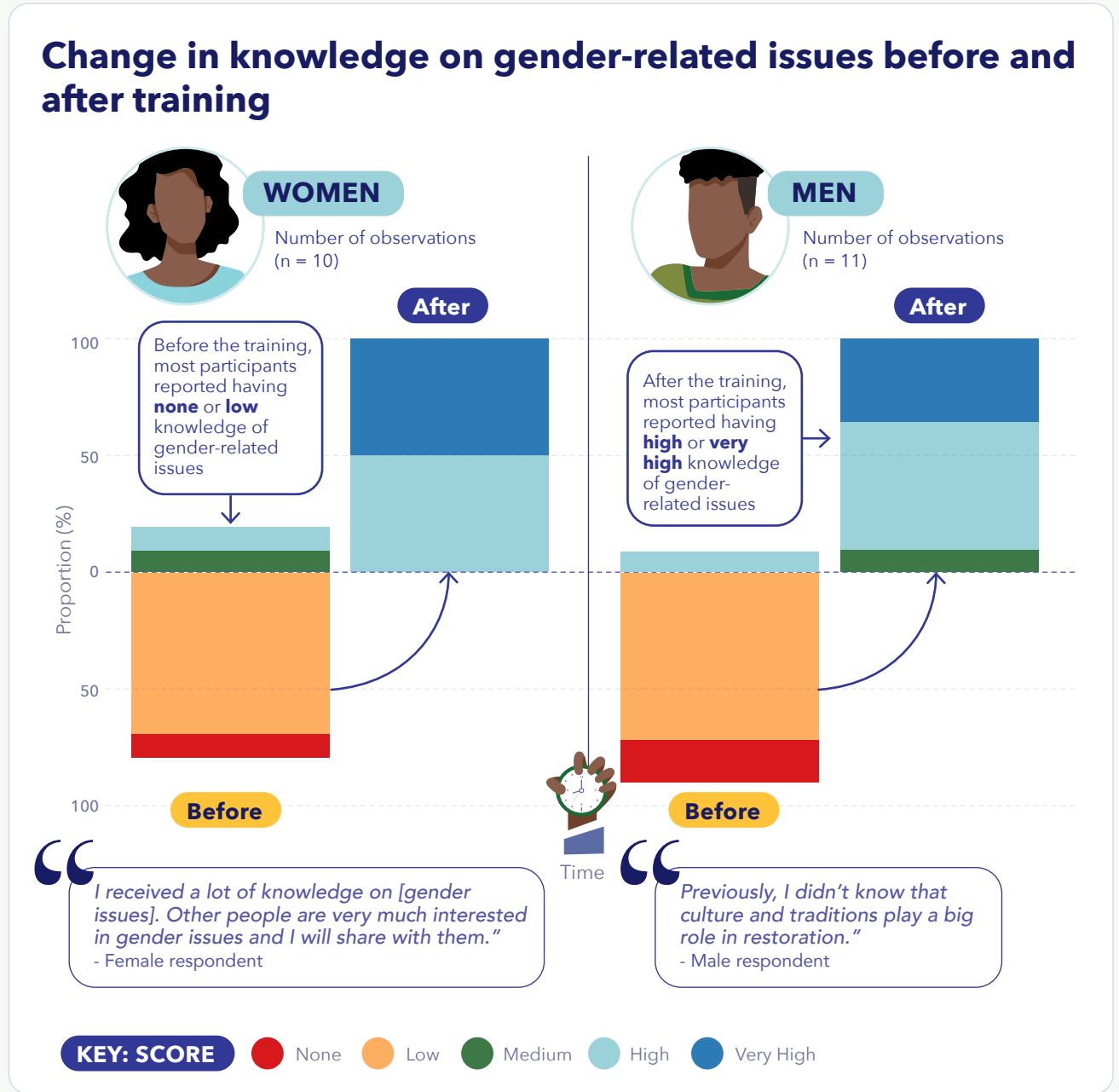


Figure 1: Perceived changes in knowledge on gender-related issues before and after training, for men and women respondents.

1 Utuneni, Kiteta, Ngunguu, Ikilisa, North Mbooni, South Mbooni, Tulimani, Kitoo, Mataa, Utangwa and Katende.

higher percentage of women respondents (50%) reported their knowledge on gender-related issues to be 'Very high' following the training compared to compared to men (36%).

Next, respondents were asked whether their **attitude** towards gender-related issues had changed since the training. Before attending the training, the average response was '**Low consideration**' with an average score of 2, while since the training they now had '**High consideration**' with an average score of 4.4. Male respondents' attitudes towards gender-related issues had increased slightly more than females, from 'Low' to 'Very high consideration'.



Before the training, I didn't have any interest with gender issues since I never knew what gender is all about. After the training I understood that gender is all about the roles performed by men and women in the community. Now I have a great interest in gender issues." - Female respondent

Some specific examples that illustrate the training-related change in knowledge of and attitude towards gender-related issues include:



Greater ability to now be able to relate, understand and work together with a spouse.



Better communication on decision making within the household and more emphasis on community dialogues to take collective action and avoid conflict.



Better division of household and farm tasks due to understanding of burdens.



Realisation of the linkages between gender and other issues, such as attitude towards leadership and inclusive restoration activities.

Change in attitude towards gender-related issues before and after training

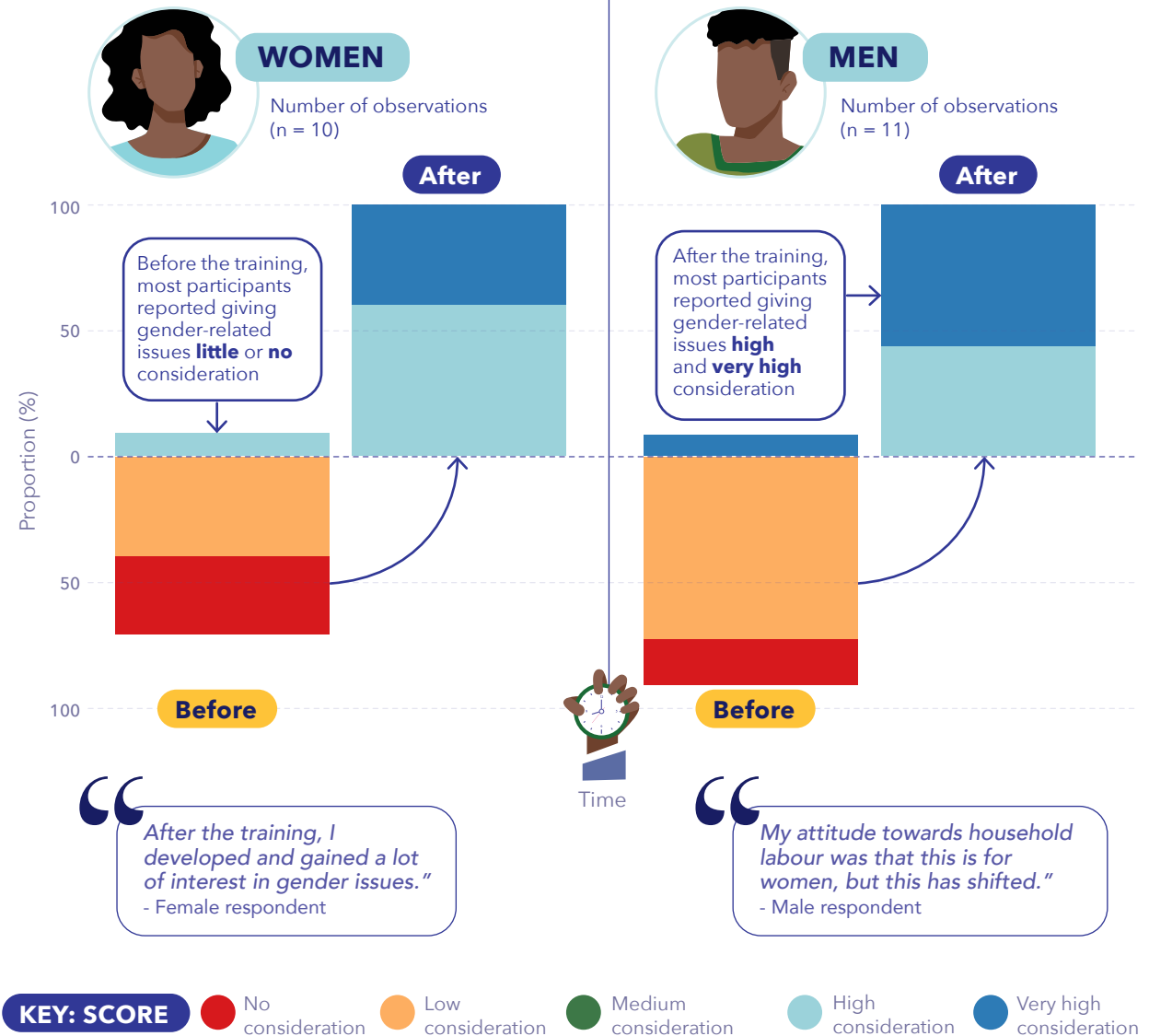


Figure 2: Change in attitude towards gender related issues before and after the training, for men and women respondents.

Changes within the CFA

Respondents were then asked how frequently gender-related issues would be raised during **CFA elections**. Before the training, they would **'Sometimes'** come up, with an average score of 3, while since the training such issues would **'Very often'** come up, with an average score of 4.5. Both male and female respondents gave similar scores (men giving a slightly higher average score in both time periods).

An example on how this increase in GESI-related issues being raised during CFA elections took form was:

With increased knowledge on the importance of including varied voices from youth, women and persons with disabilities (PWDs) these groups were now being given more specific consideration and now had more management positions.

Since the training, the elections for the Mbooni CFA Management and Executive Committees (which manages 11 forest blocks) took place. Votes led to a management committee of 10 males and 5 females with one PWD, and from these an executive committee of 4 males and 1 female.

Frequency that gender-related issues came up in CFA meetings before and after training

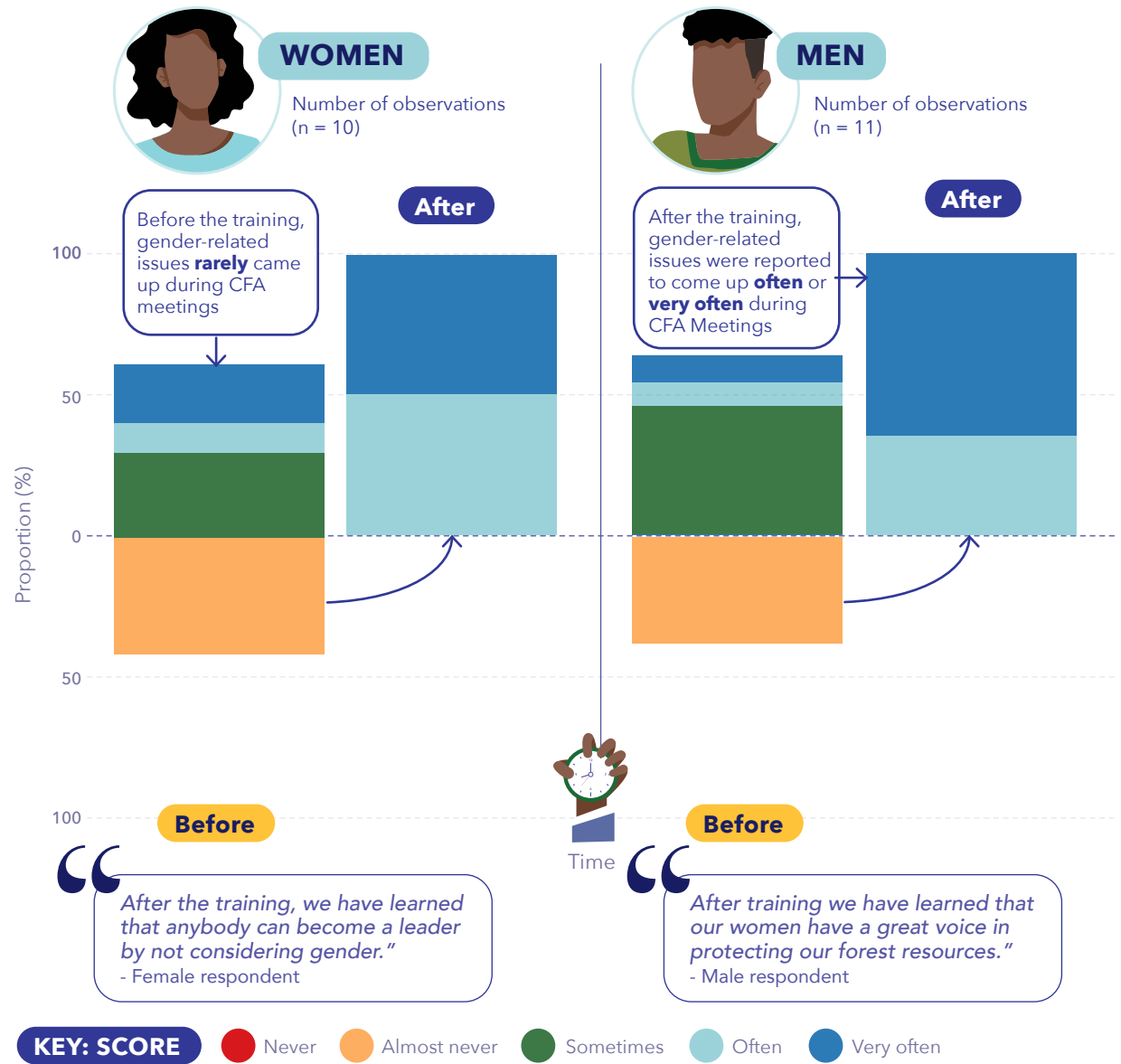


Figure 3: Shift in gender-related issues consideration during CFA meetings and elections before and after the training, as perceived by men and women respondents.

Application of knowledge

Respondents were asked about the extent to which they had **applied** at least some of the gender training content across different aspects of their lives.

Professionally, respondents had ‘**Highly**’ applied at least some of the gender training material, with men and women providing similar scores (men giving a slightly higher average score). Some examples of professional application of training knowledge included:



Inclusive on-farm and business practices, which respondents say have led to increased income.



Better understanding that gender should not determine the division of roles, responsibilities or decision-making.

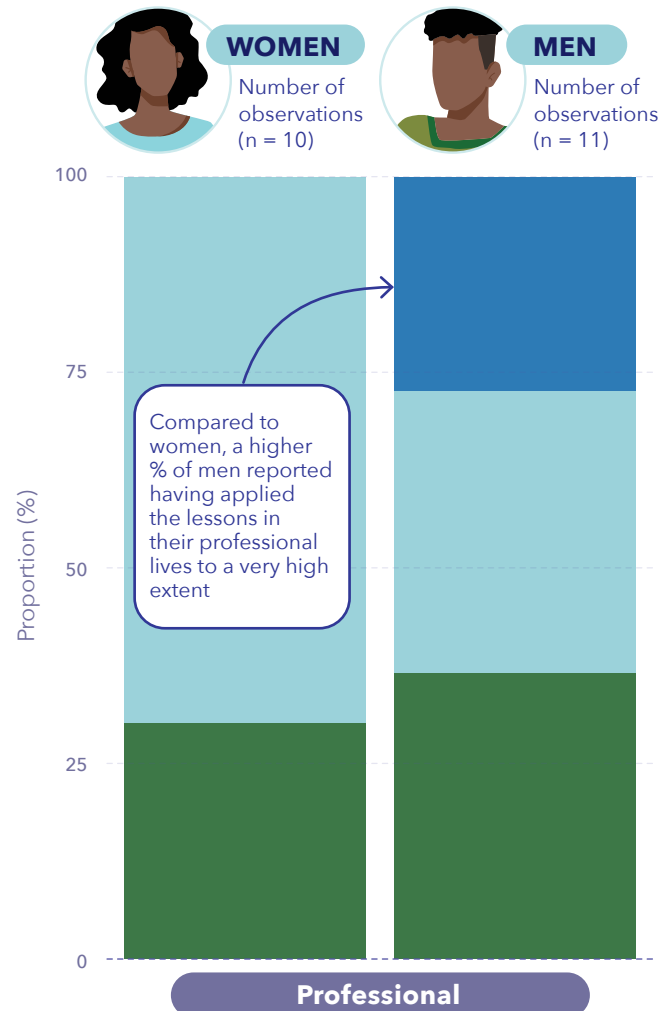


Sharing knowledge of training with others, so that they can benefit and share resources as well.



I have had an increased income from produce since I include everyone in my family on farm production decisions as opposed to before.”- Male respondent

I challenged my boss at work to include women in a sector previously considered for men only.”- Male respondent



KEY: SCORE

None Low Medium High Very High

Figure 4: Application of the training content across different aspects of the respondents lives, for men and women respondents.



Respondents also **'Highly'** applied at least some of the training in their **personal, household lives**, with an average score of 4.2 out of 5. Males and females again provided similar scores, with men giving a slightly higher average score. Some examples of applying the training in their households included:



Better communication and more inclusive household decision making, including finances and schooling.



More sharing of household tasks, including division of labour on the farm.



Increased joint ownership of family assets.



Today I am doing some household chores such as washing dishes, cooking and baby-sitting my grandchildren. A thing I considered a taboo before gender training. - Male respondent

- Male respondent

I used to be overwhelmed with work in my house, but now we do it together with husband and kids. - Female respondent

- Female respondent

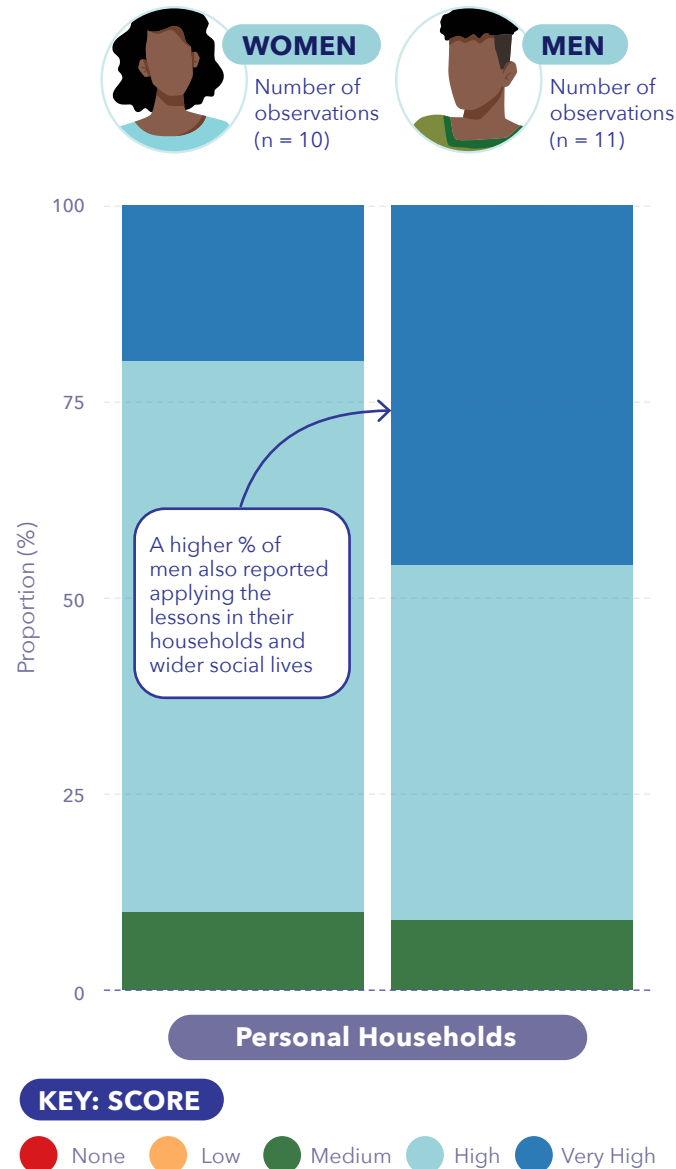


Figure 5: Application of the training content across different aspects of the respondents lives, for men and women respondents.



In their **personal, social lives**, the majority of respondents again ‘Highly’ applied at least some of the training material (average score of 4 out of 5). Men and women again provided similar scores with men giving a slightly higher average score. Some examples of training application in their social lives included:



Greater confidence to now speak up.



An expansion in understanding what is possible in their social role, including now providing counseling among groups (families, social groups) and sharing gender principles to other groups.



At first I couldn't stand and address even a small group of people. I used to shy off and feel inferior. After the training I can confidently interact and express myself in a large group.” - Female respondent

I was given an opportunity to train a group of couples in my church ... Using my notes and flip-charts availed during our local trainings, I was able to deliver.” - Female respondent



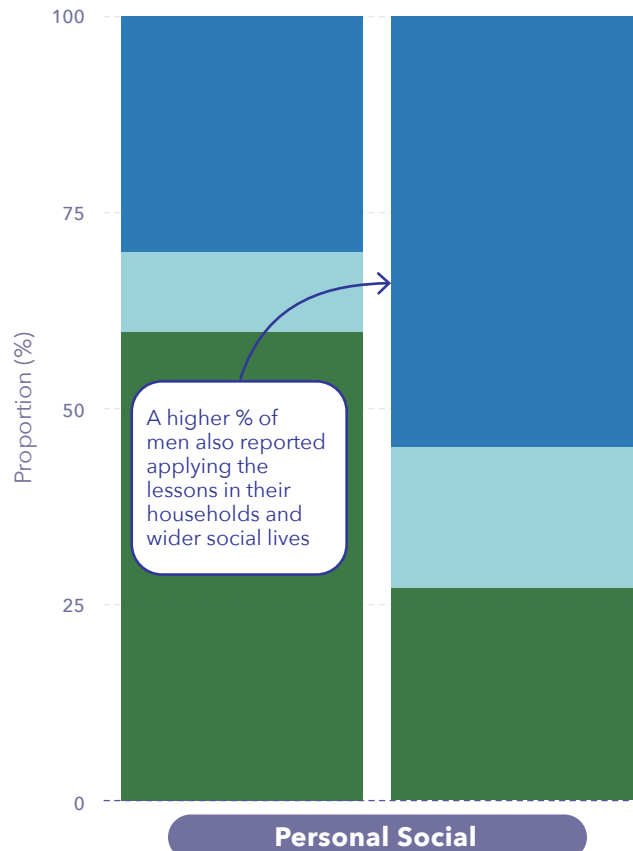
WOMEN

Number of observations (n = 10)



MEN

Number of observations (n = 11)



KEY: SCORE

None (Red) Low (Orange) Medium (Green) High (Light Blue) Very High (Dark Blue)

Figure 6: Application of the training content across different aspects of the respondents lives, for men and women respondents.



Sharing knowledge beyond the training



All 21 respondents said they had **told someone who did not attend** the training sessions about some of the gender training content and that they would be **interested in attending a future** gender training session.

Suggestions on what this training should include were:



More emphasis on couples training content and role play.



More youth focused training.



An expansion of participants so more can take part especially using methods such as vision journey, gender balance tree and position bar.

Take-home messages

The results of this engagement study suggest that the training material left a lasting impression on respondents and has led to tangible shifts to attitudes and practices. Their **knowledge** of gender related issues substantially increased thanks to the training, which brought about a large shift in their **attitude** and consideration for such issues. These two results have materialised at the community level by gender-related issues now being brought up much more frequently during **Mbooni CFA elections**, giving previously marginalised groups more voice and representation. They have also positively materialised through multiple facets of respondents' personal (family and social) and professional lives.

Across answers, male and female respondents gave very similar answers, suggesting that the training content was suitably tailored and relatable to both sexes. Both male and females' starting points – while subjective – were also very similar, suggesting that the training was equally required.

Overall, female respondents' knowledge on gender-related issues increased slightly more than men's. Some respondents suggested that the concepts opened a whole new way of thinking, with men's attitudes towards gender-related issues shifting more than women's. This is significant as the social and cultural context of these counties values men's input and control in many aspects of daily life. These shifts in attitudes and practices from both men and women opens the way for a more inclusive social fabric.

Inclusive land restoration activities that include participation equally from women, men, youth, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups, will lead to more sustainable and equitable outcomes while scaling restoration efforts. Ignoring gender in the design and implementation of nature-based solutions and FLR can exacerbate existing inequalities and undermine the success of restoration efforts. Community Dialogues are a powerful tool to facilitate open discussions about gender constraints and opportunities and lead to equitable, sustainable, and beneficial land restoration.



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