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: Mourine Wanjiku Karanja

Age: 31 years

Kenya
- Sera
- Maasai Mara
- Amboseli

Place of Training: Maasai Mara

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.

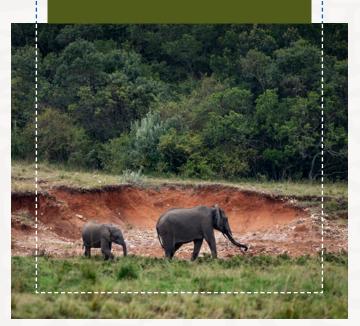Which LDSF activities were you engaged in, during the training?

" **Measuring water infiltration and conducting transects during the rangeland health module.**

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

"I learnt to use locus maps, and I learnt a lot about data collection and data entry. I also learnt to identify grass species. I learnt that the ecosystem works as a whole. Everything within the ecosystem is interrelated each to the other, for example the infiltration rate shows the rate of percolation, which is useful for plant growth, not only that it shows the soil structure and porosity for seed germination and growth.

What did you enjoy most?

"The team was knowledgeable and I enjoyed learning more about rangeland plants and their value. Musembi (the botanist) didn't hesitate to highlight any important shrub or tree that we came across. I also enjoyed the hikes, as we would go to the top of the hill and had sightings animals, including elephants!

How will you use this knowledge?

"It will be very useful to support decision-making, especially on the grazing management program. It was quite interesting to learn that areas where proper grazing management is implemented have a faster restoration rate as compared to the overgrazed areas. I will use my plant identification knowledge to assist the Mara ecosystem to make their own herbarium.

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

"The Mara ecosystem isn't badly off, but the grazing management systems need improvement. Areas such as Sekinani at Mara Rianda need urgent attention, due to overgrazing or lack of a grazing management policy. There are various methods which can be employed to improve the rangelands, such as reseeding and burning at the onset of rain. This helps to break dormancy of various grass species, hence increasing biodiversity.

I also think we should have policies safeguarding the restored areas.

Project Contact

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