



IGEN-EA CALLS FOR AN END TO BARRIERS UNDERMINING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN GREEN ECONOMY

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Today, the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) joins the rest of the world to mark the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women.

IGEN-EA is a network of over 35 civil society and private sector players from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. The network promotes green economic alternatives including sustainable agriculture and fisheries, clean energy, tourism and natural resources management in East Africa.

On the occasion of International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women, IGEN-EA is calling on East African governments, cultural institutions, religious leaders and other relevant stakeholders to harness opportunities and address barriers undermining women's participation in green economic sectors.

OPPORTUNITIES

"Poverty and gender inequality are some of the key drivers of violence against women. To reduce women's risk to gender-based violence, it is important to economically empower women. The green economic sectors of agriculture, fisheries, tourism and clean energy offer opportunities to empower women. These should be harnessed," Ms. Diana Nabiruma, the coordinator of IGEN-EA, says.

Ms. Helen Lubowa of Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA) adds, "Government and other relevant stakeholders should replicate case studies that demonstrate instances where conservation/sustainable activities have improved the elimination of violence against women."

Ms. Christine Nyangoma of the Oil Refinery Residents Association (ORRA) says, "There are women beekeepers in Hoima who were the subject of [research](#) that was produced by IGEN-EA in June 2022. These women indicated that the violence in their homes decreased since they started engaging in beekeeping. With more family income, there were less fights."

Mr. Ben Ntale, a tour operator, adds, "The tourism industry is male dominated. Realising this, some sector players are engaged in efforts to empower women to work in the sector. One of the initiatives that I would like to point out is the Ukarimu project, under which women have been trained as driver-guides. Women are also increasingly getting involved in ranger-guiding,

bird-guiding, station guiding and other jobs. More should be done to increase women participation in the sector.”

BARRIERS

While opportunities exist, barriers do as well and IGEN-EA is calling for their addressing.

“Women provide over 70% of the labourforce in the agrifood system but their access to productive assets such as land is limited; only about 16% own land. At the same time, women bear the burden for most of the households in the country and are deeply affected by poverty. Many are thus unable to engage in business or any profitable venture. This has left them vulnerable to all forms of violence,” Mr. Brian Lucky Wamboka of Food Rights Alliance (FRA) says.

Mr. Gerald Barekye of Centre for Environmental Research and Agricultural Innovations (CERAI) adds, “Women’s access to financial resources is also limited. While agricultural loans are available, women’s limited access to productive assets means that they lack the collateral security needed to access loans.”

Ms. Shadia Nakazibwe of Environment Governance Institute (EGI) further notes, “Many women also cannot take their agricultural produce to markets. For some, domestic care work keeps them at home. For others, lack of access to transport means like bicycles is a challenge. In addition, Ugandans spend up to [12%](#) of their income on transport costs. Being affected by poverty, you find that few women can afford to take their produce to markets. They ask their husbands to help and some of them misuse the money.”

Mr. Hakim Baliraine of Eastern and Southern Small-scale Farmers’ Forum (ESSAF) notes, “Technical factors such as women not being able to access and use high technical tools, low levels of education, marginalisation of women and failure to involve women in policy process hampers their capacity to engage in green economic activities.”

The above and other barriers should be addressed by the East African governments and development partners through increasing retention of girls in schools, skilling women in green economic activities as well as enhancing women’s access to productive assets, finances and suitable high technology tools.

Efforts should also be made to address socio-cultural barriers and the marginalization of women which limits their participation or earnings from green economic activities.

“Women including those in Tanzania have been negatively impacted by climatic changes characterised by changing weather patterns. The agricultural sector, which employs the majority of women in East Africa, has been hurt by the changes. Efforts should be made to make women resilient to climate change,” Ms. Rehema Peters of Partnerships for a Green Future (PGF), says.

ENDS

Note to editors

All the organisations mentioned in this press release belong to IGEN-EA. You may read more about IGEN-EA by visiting <https://www.igen-ea.org> or [@IGENEastAfrica](#) on Twitter.

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