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Women in Elang'ata Wuas Turn to Agriculture to Combat Climate Change Impacts



Women in Elang'ata Wuas proudly hold up their fresh harvest, embracing agriculture as a powerful response to the impacts of climate change in their community

A quiet revolution is taking root in Elang'ata Wuas, Kajiado West, Kajiado County, where women are rising to meet the challenges of climate change. In a region historically reliant on pastoralism, now increasingly unsustainable due to recurrent droughts, women are embracing agriculture as a resilient and empowering alternative. This shift is being driven by support from ActionAid Kenya through the Iloodokilani Women's Network.

At the center of this transformation is a model farm in Isinya Omelok village. Designed as both a demonstration and training hub, the farm is a living example of how climate-smart agriculture can strengthen food security, generate income, and elevate women's roles in their communities. In addition to serving as a learning center, the farm also produces vegetables for household consumption and sale, providing both nutrition and a source of income.



A woman harvests tomatoes at the model farm in Isinya Omelok, Elang'ata Wuas.
Photo: Elena Milani, EU Solidarity Corps Volunteer-Rebuild Project/ActionAid Kenya

A key innovation driving the initiative is a reliable water supply sourced from a nearby government-owned main pipeline, supplemented by harvested rainwater stored in elevated tanks for irrigation. With support from ActionAid Kenya, this system ensures consistent, year-round crop cultivation, even during dry seasons, empowering women to take greater control of their livelihoods.

"We used to rely solely on livestock, but the droughts wiped them out, and restocking became a big challenge," says Sikampe, a member of the women's group. "Now, we grow vegetables and keep bees. We have food at home and even some to sell. This farm is transforming our lives."

In addition to infrastructure, women have received agricultural training, seeds, and tools, enabling them to replicate techniques learned at the farm in their own homes. Many have since established flourishing kitchen gardens using rainwater harvesting methods, transforming once-barren plots into productive green spaces.

"Before this, we didn't think farming could work here," shares Naisola, who now tends a thriving home garden. "My children are eating better, and I don't have to buy vegetables. We're saving money and improving our health."



Women tending to crop at the farm in Isinya Omelok, Elang'ata Wuas. Photo: Elena Milani, EU Solidarity Corps Volunteer-Rebuild Project/ActionAid Kenya

Guiding the initiative are a committed team from ActionAid Kenya, including Christine Naiputa, Samson Kutata, and Catherine Mbiti. Speaking at the model farm, Naiputa emphasized that the program's impact reaches far beyond agriculture.

"These women have shown that with the right support and training, they can adapt and lead their communities toward sustainable futures," she said. "They're becoming champions of climate resilience. This is more than income, it's about leadership, self-reliance, and protecting their children's future.

The ripple effects are already visible. Inspired by the success in Omelok, women and youth from neighboring areas are visiting the model farm to learn and adopt similar practices. The long-term goal: to replicate this model across Elang'ata Wuas.

Through innovation, resilience, and solidarity, the women of Elang'ata Wuas are not just growing crops; they're cultivating change.

Empowering Young Voices to Advance Children's Rights



A forum for girls in Garissa, led by Zamzam Hassan, Programme Coordinator of The Girl Generation's Africa-led Movement to End FGM/C (TGG-ALM), empowering young people to lead in advocating for children's rights.

As we mark this year's Day of the African Child, under the theme "Planning for Children's Rights Progress Since 2010", we reflect not only on how far we've come but also on the crucial work still ahead. Since the African Union adopted this commemorative day, the continent has been urged to prioritize children's rights. At ActionAid International Kenya (AAIK), this has translated into direct action in schools, where girls and boys are empowered to become active defenders of their rights.

In partnership with the Ministry of Education, ActionAid Kenya, through the Girl Generation -Support to the Africa Led Movement to End FGM/C Programme (TGG-ALM) has been implementing a dynamic school-based programme in Garissa and Isiolo counties aimed at empowering children, especially girls, to understand and advocate for their rights.



A forum for girls in Garissa, led by Zamzam Hassan, Programme Coordinator of The Girl Generation's Africa-led Movement to End FGM/C (TGG-ALM), empowering young people to lead in advocating for children's rights

Through Girls' and Boys' Forums held within primary and junior secondary schools, children engage in structured dialogue and learning sessions that foster awareness, leadership, and resilience. These sessions are guided by dedicated teachers, known as forum patrons, using a comprehensive Facilitation Manual developed by ActionAid Kenya.

This manual does more than educate. It equips. Children learn about the legal and social protections available to them, building an essential foundation of knowledge that many never had access to before. The manual guides them through sensitive but critical topics, including education, gender, power, and sexual and reproductive health. These lessons are helping girls to challenge deep-rooted norms and speak out against violence, harmful practices like Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C), and the silencing of their voices.

Safe spaces have been created within these forums, allowing children to express themselves freely, share personal experiences, and support one another without fear of judgment, harm, or stigma. Girls are gaining not only knowledge but also the courage and confidence to lead in their schools and in their communities. They are learning where and how to report cases of violence and abuse, and most importantly, they know they have a right to be protected.

In both Garissa and Isiolo, we are already witnessing a transformation. Students who once hesitated to speak now lead discussions on child protection and uphold children's rights. They are shaping conversations with their parents, elders, and peers, actively challenging harmful cultural norms and influencing positive change.

"It has been fulfilling to witness the increase in knowledge of participating girls and boys on issues such as FGM/C, influencing positive shifts in their beliefs, and building their agency, decision-making power, and leadership to challenge harmful practices and uphold their rights in their communities," says Zamzam Hassan, Programme Coordinator for The Girl Generation – Support to the Africa Led Movement to End FGM/C Programme (TGG-ALM)

Since 2010, Africa has made visible progress in strengthening policies and frameworks for child protection, but these gains must be matched by continued investment in localized, practical solutions. AAIK's work in Garissa and Isiolo is a testament to what is possible when children are not only educated but also empowered to become the architects of their futures.

As we commemorate this day, we celebrate the voices of the children who are rising. They are not just learning; they are leading. And as they grow, so too does our hope for a continent where every child can thrive in dignity, safety, and equality.



Zamzam Hassan, Project Coordinator for TGG-ALM, and Pauline Atieno, Project Coordinator for the WRP Programme, speak to girls in Garissa.

When Change Bleats: Hannah's Story of Empowerment



Hannah smiles warmly at the camera, with her traditional manyatta standing proudly in the background.
Photo: Elena Milani, EU Solidarity Corps Volunteer-Rebuild Project/ActionAid Kenya

It's past noon. The sky is clear, and the sun remains high and sharp, despite it being mid-June. The heat presses down steadily, and after a full morning visiting different locations across Elang'ata Wuas with my colleagues, we arrive at our final stop for the day.

We park the car and step out onto a flat stretch of compact, dry earth. The ground is hard beneath our feet, the air quiet except for the occasional rustle of wind through the trees. A small manyatta stands on one side of the compound. From its entrance, a woman steps out and walks toward us with a warm smile. She greets us and invites us to sit under the shade of a large tree at the centre of the homestead.

Her name is Hannah Shinai, and we've come here to listen to her story.

Hannah is 30 years old and a mother of five, four daughters and a son. The youngest, her son, runs around playing with a few puppies, soon joined by one of his older sisters.

She got married when she was 17, and like many other women in her community, she never had the opportunity to attend school.



Hannah shares a peaceful moment with her son and their playful goats on a sunny afternoon at the homestead.
Photo: Elena Milani, EU Solidarity Corps Volunteer-Rebuild Project/ActionAid Kenya

Despite traditional norms and economic hardship, she is determined to change this narrative for herself and her children. She explains:

“I want my children to go to school so that they can support themselves and live a better life than I did.”

Hannah tells us about the drought that swept through the area and how she lost all her cows, her family’s main source of food and income.

It was during this period that she connected with the Ildookilani Women Network (IWN), a community-based organization dedicated to supporting women across Elang’ata Wuas. The organization focuses on raising awareness about women’s rights and empowering women economically through several activities. Through the network, she found the support she needed, and after her situation was assessed, she received a pregnant Galla goat. After giving birth, its milk, rich in nutrients, became a vital lifeline. Regarding this, Hannah says:

“The goat’s milk helped me feed my babies when we had nothing. It kept them healthy while we were struggling.”

That one goat also marked the beginning of a new path. Today, Hannah has four goats and is slowly building up her herd. Her goal is to create a stable income, enough to sustain her family and ensure that all her children can access education.

At the same time, Hannah continues to strengthen her household’s economic stability. She supplements her income by selling food at the local livestock market each week and is an active member of the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA), where she saves and borrows money to support both her business and her family’s needs. She explains:

“Selling food at the market and saving with my women’s group has helped me stand on my own. I can now support my family and plan for the future.”



Hannah outside her homestead. Photo: Elena Milani, EU Solidarity Corps Volunteer-Rebuild Project/ActionAid Kenya

As we listen, it becomes clear that her story goes beyond rebuilding her livelihood. Hannah is a survivor of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), a practice that, despite being illegal in Kenya since 2011, continues to affect girls in many rural communities.

Through the awareness and advocacy work done by Ildookilani Women Network (IWN), she began challenging this deep-rooted social norm that has shaped the lives of women in her community for generations. After participating in awareness sessions, she and her husband made the decision not to let their daughters undergo this practice. She says:

“Even though I went through FGM, my husband and I have agreed that our daughters will never face the same. We now know it’s harmful and against the law.”

As we prepare to leave, Hannah walks us to the shed and shows us her goats. Standing there, one cannot help but reflect on what people can achieve when the right community support and empowerment are in place. Rather than offering temporary relief, such as food aid that would have lasted only a few weeks or cash handouts that would have been quickly spent, IWN provided Hannah with the means to build a sustainable future. The single goat was not just a form of assistance; it was an investment in her capacity to become self-reliant. With the right opportunities, women like Hannah are not only surviving climate and economic crises, but they are also rewriting their stories and those of their daughters. Hannah’s story is just one of many that the Ildookilani Women Network, supported by ActionAid Kenya, continues to nurture across Elang’ata Wuas.

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