



Empowering women to manage drought-prone lands: Amkeni Wamama

Ituri Province is one of the regions affected by drought, with devastating impacts on local populations, particularly women and children. The effects of global warming are evident on the population and the environment, particularly the rise in temperature with intense heat, climatic disruptions increasing food crises, and reduced quality of water for diverse uses in the community. This project aims to strengthen the capacities of 80 women and girls in four villages (Bembey, Rwampara, Tokodo, and Mandro) to develop and implement innovative solutions for drought resilience, improve women's access to the resources and technologies needed to cope with drought, and promote women's participation in decision making on climate change.

Initiative overview

The project is structured around three main axes:

- Support for local initiatives: The project will support local initiatives led by women and girls that contribute to drought resilience.
- Capacity building: The project will provide training and workshops to women and girls to strengthen their skills in agroforestry, soil conservation techniques, drought-resistant crops, and environmental protection, enabling them to develop and implement innovative solutions for drought resilience.
- Women's empowerment: Promotion of gender equality and the active engagement of women in decision making in diverse spaces.



Beneficiaries will be supported in planting at least 50 trees per beneficiary in each village. They will be mobilised to make space profitable as a result of agroforestry and crops. The trees will help improve the air quality in the community and serve as a means of empowerment. Corn, beans, and soy will be used to feed their households and encourage financial autonomy. The beneficiaries will design and build improved stoves that they can also resell to meet the various needs of their families; these are stoves that use reduced amounts of fuel, which is beneficial for air quality and environmental health. This project aims to contribute to SDGs 13 (climate action) and 15 (life on land).

Women's involvement

In Ituri Province, women play a crucial role in managing drought-prone lands. They are often the first to experience the impacts of drought and have developed unique knowledge and practices to cope. In the agri-cultural sector, women represent most of the workforce and play an essential role in the family economy and

the country. Women collect and transport water for domestic consumption, garden irrigation, and livestock farming. They manage water resources sustainably and equitably, and are adopting water conservation techniques, like rainwater harvesting and drip irrigation.

As women are responsible for agriculture and food processing in the home, they are responsible for changes, such as cultivating drought-resistant crop varieties using sustainable techniques. They diversify food sources to guarantee family food security, plant legumes to fertilise the soil, trees, and shrubs to combat erosion and desertification, use improved stoves to reduce excessive firewood consumption, and apply soil conservation techniques, such as mulching and crop rotation, to protect biodiversity and natural resources.

In household waste management, biodegradable waste is preserved and used to fertilise fields, and non-degradable substances are disposed of sustainably. Waste is recycled and transformed. Women also plant fruit trees and lawns to combat erosion and maintain the soil.

Women raise awareness in communities about the dangers of drought and provide information and education on SLM practices. They educate children on the importance of environmental protection, reforestation, and agroforestry to improve fertility and diversify food sources. Further, they take on leadership roles in local organisations and development initiatives, contribute to the research and development of sustainable solutions to drought, and mobilise funds to organise meetings and community awareness on women's roles in environmental protection. Women are key actors in managing droughtprone lands. Their contribution is essential to strengthen community resilience to climate change and guarantee a sustainable future.

Women champions



At the community level:

- Local women leaders have proven experience in natural resource management and community mobilisation (women from religious faiths, women from local women's associations).
- Innovative farmers develop sustainable and drought-resistant agricultural techniques.
- Mothers and educators raise awareness among families and communities about the dangers of drought and encourage environmental conservation practices.

- Artisans and entrepreneurs use local natural resources to create artisanal products and generate income for their families, drawing on the extensive knowledge local women have of the use of medicinal plants to combat the effects of drought.
- Women living with disabilities are often the most vulnerable to the impacts of drought, and their inclusion is essential for inclusive and sustainable projects.
- Displaced people, unmarried mothers, community leaders, Indigenous peoples (Pygmies), as well as other stakeholders intervene in this area.

On a national level:

- Experts on the environment and climate change bring their scientific and technical expertise to the project.
- Women leaders of civil society organisations (CSOs) advocate for women's rights and environmental protection.
- Women politicians (members of parliament, senators, etc.) contribute to the development and implementation of sustainable development policies.
- Researchers and academics carry out research on innovative solutions to drought.

At the regional level:

- Representatives of regional organisations facilitate collaboration and the sharing of experiences between women in the region.
- Researchers and academics carry out research on innovative solutions to drought.
- Communicators raise public awareness of the problem of drought and the importance of women's participation in addressing it.

Challenges

Hindered access to essential resources, equipment, and training: Women have difficulty accessing natural resources, like land, water, and financial credit. They lack the equipment and technologies necessary to implement their innovative solutions, and face cultural and social obstacles (e.g. lack of right to inheritance). Support is needed to mobilise financial resources for women's projects and to provide women with necessary training and information to strengthen their leadership and land management skills and gain technical support to be able to adapt technologies and practices to their specific local contexts.

GBV and discrimination: Women face risks of GBV and discrimination, preventing them from fully participating in decision making and land management at both family and community levels.



United Nations
Convention to Combat
Desertification



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

Supported by



Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

On behalf of



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development



**For more information,
contact:**

Jacqueline Borve
pamabunia2015@gmail.com