JULY - SEPT 2026 ISSUE

# AFRICA CSID NEWSLETTER



## Message from the MEAL Office

**Dear Partners and Colleagues,**



**Clifford Odero - MEAL Officer**

We acknowledge the opportunities this last quater gave us to engage with communities we work with to make the world a better place.

We worked with grassroot and community-focused organizations on gende, climate and conflict nexus, food systems and agroforestry across Kenya and Zanzibar.

The numbers gave us a useful starting point, we reached more than 500 women, men, boys and girls of diverse categories. The stories behind those numbers are what stood out: from women and youth speaking openly about peace, climate-related challenges and issues affecting their communities, to smallholder farmers sharing practical experiences around agroecology and agroforestry including circular food systems, to children sharing their experience in tree planting and growing and land restoration, and community actors sharing their experiences and lessons on disaster preparedness and response.

As we look ahead, we anticipate creating more engagement and partnerships that will allow spaces for learning and co-creation!

Happy Reading!

**500+ WOMEN & YOUTH REACHED**

Equipping communities with the tools to enhance food security, climate resilience and climate security

**RESULTS**

Bridging the gap between policy and practice both at national and grassroot level

# 1. WOMEN, FAITH AND CLIMATE SECURITY

Across Kenya's fragile ecosystems, women are stepping forward as architects of peace and resilience in the face of climate insecurity. In July, Africa CSID, with support from KAIROS Canada, convened dialogues in Baringo, Homabay and Migori counties - each county revealing how climate pressures, resource competition, and social vulnerabilities intersect, and how women's leadership is reshaping responses at household, community, and policy levels.

The dialogues were more than just meetings; they were a showcase of resilience built on the back of community action. In each setting, women and communities came together to confront the realities of climate insecurity, resource competition, and fragile ecosystems. These engagements created safe spaces for truth-telling, solidarity, and collective problem-solving: spaces where women could speak openly about loss, pain, exploitation, and livelihood strain, but also about healing, faith, hope and rebuilding.

The engagements were held in three areas: Mukutani in Baringo County, Mbita in Homabay County, and Muhuru Bay in Migori County.

## *(a) Scarcity on the Lake, Solidarity on the Shore*



In Mukutani, rising temperatures and shifting weather patterns have eroded traditional coping mechanisms, while competition over scarce natural resources has fueled cycles of tension and violence. Livestock theft, territorial disputes, and competition for grazing land remain persistent triggers of insecurity, often escalating into conflict that disrupt livelihoods, loss of lives and fracture social cohesion.

Against this backdrop, women from the Pokot, Ilchamus, and Endorois communities have emerged as unlikely but powerful peace architects. Their work is rooted not in formal institutions but in the everyday rhythms of prayer, fellowship, and relationship-building. For two months leading up to the July engagement at Mukutani AIC Church, women prayed intentionally for one another across community lines. They fasted, reflected, and nurtured bonds of trust that culminated in a deeply symbolic act: the exchange of gifts and the sharing of a communal meal. These gestures, simple yet profound, embodied reconciliation and solidarity, turning faith into a tangible peace practice.



The meeting was not an isolated event but part of a longer journey. Women recalled moments of severe insecurity when more than 1,000 of them mobilized collectively to demand peace along the Mukutani-Marigat road. Their courage disrupted cycles of violence and pressed authorities to respond. Today, their sustained engagement has contributed to relative stability in mobility and security. Where once vehicles required police escort, people now move more freely, livestock graze with less fear, and boys remain at home to attend school rather than being drawn into child soldier roles. This change is a restoration of family life, a chance to rebuild, and the hope of futures unburdened by conflict.



The Government collaborates with the community in the peace making process. During the engagement, the Deputy County Commissioner committed to including women's peace groups in the Sub-County Security Committee, signaling a bridge between grassroots voices and formal decision-making. Such commitments validate women's leadership and ensure that their lived experiences of climate insecurity, displacement, and conflict inform local peace and security strategies!

## *(d) Scarcity on the Lake, Solidarity on the Shore*

Homabay County, nestled along the shores of Lake Victoria, is a region where climate change and human insecurity collide with devastating consequences. Once abundant waters is now yielding fewer fish, a decline driven by warmer conditions, and ecological stress. For fishing communities at Lwanda Beach in Mbita, this scarcity is not just an environmental concern but a matter of survival.

As fish stock dwindles, fishers are being forced to venture farther into contested waters, encroaching on grounds claimed by neighboring communities such as Uyoma. What began as a livelihood necessity has escalated into confrontation, leaving families grieving, households destabilized, and communities fractured.

The lake, once a source of sustenance and stability, now embodies uncertainty. Fishers depart each day unsure if they will return safely, while their families wait anxiously, knowing that disputes over fishing grounds can turn fatal. Some men have been killed in these clashes, their bodies never recovered, compounding the trauma for families denied closure. This daily insecurity transforms fishing from a livelihood into a gamble with life and death.




The consequences ripple through households. Women, often dependent on fish trading to sustain their families, face economic strain when catch is scarce or prices rise. Scarcity has also reinforced unequal power relations, with reports of fishermen demanding sexual favors before selling fish to women traders. For many, refusing such demands means losing access to a critical livelihood resource. This intersection of climate pressure, economic vulnerability, and gendered exploitation underscores why climate security should be understood not only as an environmental issue but as a human security crisis.

Yet amid these challenges, resilience is taking root. The Ten Ladies Women Group, the group we engaged with in Lwanda Beach, has become a beacon of collective strength in Mbita. What began as a merry-go-round for economic and spiritual support has evolved into a platform for solidarity, dialogue, and problem-solving. The women meet regularly to share experiences, encourage one another, and devise locally grounded solutions. The group is a resilience infrastructure, helping women navigate livelihood shocks, psychosocial strain, and protection risks. By organizing themselves, they have created a trusted space where healing, faith, and hope coexist with practical strategies for survival.



## *(c) Where Warming Waters Meet Contested Borders*




Migori County's Muhuru Bay sits at the tri-border of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, a place where livelihoods, climate pressures, and geopolitics converge. Fishing is not just an occupation here. It is the backbone of household economies, the source of daily sustenance.

Yet the waters now embody uncertainty. Prolonged heat has warmed the shallower areas of Lake Victoria, altering fish distribution. According to community observations, fish breed in shallow waters but increasingly migrate to deeper, cooler zones. Many of these productive fishing grounds lie near contested borders, pushing Kenyan fishermen farther into risky waters where they face arrest, harassment, and confiscation of catch by border patrol.

This ecological shift has created a direct climate-security pathway as environmental change drives fish scarcity, scarcity forces fishermen into contested waters, and contested waters expose them to cross-border insecurity. The consequences reverberate through households. A fisherman may invest in fuel, gear, and labor, only to return empty-handed after losing his catch to enforcement officers.

Families are left without income, women absorb the strain of keeping households afloat in patriarchal society, and children face school dropout when education costs can no longer be met. The psychological toll is immense.

Yet amid these challenges, the Kobunda Women Group has become a vital source of resilience. Rooted in faith and solidarity, the women gather regularly to pray, encourage one another, and support families whose members face risks on the lake. Their networks surface community concerns, foster dialogue, and provide psychosocial support.



# 2. SEED FOR CHANGE

## (a) Food and Seed Symposium




There are moments when a community pauses, looks back, and realizes that what once defined its identity is slipping away. The taste of millet porridge shared around a fire, the wisdom of elders teaching seed preservation, the laughter of children learning traditional recipes, the living threads of a culture once vibrant and resilient.

Through the Food and Seed Symposium, the community of Chamachichi in Nyatike,Migori County gathered to reignite its almost forgotten culture and chart a path towards a climate-resilient future when it comes to food and seeds.

Hosted by Africa CSID in collaboration with the Kawino Women and Youth Group and supported by the Agroecology Fund, the symposium was a vibrant convergence of generations and voices. Children, youth, women, elders, and leaders came together to rediscover foods that had nourished their ancestors and to celebrate practices that had nearly faded from daily life.



Tables brimmed with traditional local delicacies, prepared with care and cultural storytelling. Guests ate and learned the meaning behind each dish, reconnecting with a heritage that had been marginalized by modern food trends. Elders spoke of indigenous seeds and farming methods, while young people also shared, ensuring that this knowledge would not be lost but carried forward through intergenerational learning.

The event extended beyond food into the fields. At the community demonstration farm, participants explored organic composting, mixed cropping, and Black Soldier Fly farming, innovations that blend tradition with modern agroecology. These practices showed how communities can restore soil health, reduce costs, enhance yields, and build resilience against climate change, proving that sustainable farming is practical, deeply rooted in local wisdom and a solution to food security.

Schools joined in, exposing children to indigenous knowledge early and sharing their knowledge. The Council of Elders emphasized the importance of food culture, while county officials pledged to integrate these lessons into policies.

One of the highlights of the day was the cassava value-addition showcase, where participants followed cassava's journey from harvest to flour, illustrated how indigenous crops can be transformed into nutritious, marketable products, strengthening both household nutrition and local economies.

The symposium showcased that indigenous foods are not relics of the past but also vital to climate adaptation, nutrition security, and cultural pride.

## A Celebration of Heritage and Resilience



Indigeneous maize seeds




Osuga/ Managu/ African nightshade




Apoth / Mrenda/ Jute Mallow



Showcase of BSF farm



Soy beans value addition station



Tree planting by students

### (b) 2nd Annual Migori County Farmers Day




In a vibrant exchange of knowledge and practice, the 2nd Annual Migori Farmers' Open Day brought together farmers, innovators, government officials, and development partners. We were honored to participate as one of the partners, standing alongside the County Government of Migori's Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Blue Economy.

Among the many exhibitors, were the Kawino Women and Youth Group from Nyatike Through our Seed for Change Project, we have worked with the group to demonstrate practical circular food systems rooted in locally available resources.

The exhibition drew wide attention, with visitors eager to learn how innovations such as Black Soldier Fly (BSF) farming can transform food waste into proteinrich feed for fish and poultry, and frass into sustainable biofertilizer. The curiosity and questions showing a growing interest in agriculture that restores land and relies less on the expensive chemical fertilizers they have been forced to rely on.




It is even more interesting to watch an initiatives nurtured at the grassroots begin to attract interest beyond the community, signaling a shift from demonstration to adoption.

## 3. ZANZADAPT

This quarter, provided an opportunity for us to deepen collaboration with our partners in Zanzibar through a two-part journey: online policy engagements with staff from Community Forests Pemba (CFP) and Community Forests International (CFI), followed by field mission in Pemba and Unguja. These efforts marked a turning point: moving from foundational gender learning into practical application and ownership.

The online sessions introduced both CFI and CFP teams to step-by-step gender analysis of policies, demystifying what had often felt like a technical or intimidating process, with participants learning to trace gaps, identify provisions, and generate recommendations that respond to gendered realities.

Building on this momentum, our team headed to Zanzibar for a field mission where they engaged with CFP and CFI staff on practical gender responsive policy analysis.

We also engaged with communities represented, by Community Action Group (CAGs), on strengthening community dialogue, mobilization, and conflict response. The change witnessed during these engagements was palpable.

Women who once hesitated to speak now voiced their perspectives with conviction. Such confidence reflects agency, ownership, and the ability to champion gender equality in everyday community spaces.





## UPCOMING EVENTS

| Date | Event |
|---|---|
| October 2026 | Pre COP31 Engagements |
| 9th Nov to 21 st Nov | COP31 Antalya, Turkiye |
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## CONTACT US

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