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PARAN WOMEN GROUP is an umbrella body of indigenous women who joined together to address different challenges faced by women and community at large. The umbrella is spread across four sub-counties of Narok; Narok South, North, West, Transmara and some part of Bomet county.

It was formed in 2005 and consists of 64 women groups with about 3000 members. The groups are self-organized and self-created with the aim of empowering and advancing indigenous women rights.

Our mission is to uplift women economically, politically and socially. We envision a society where women have guaranteed opportunities of development that enables exercise their right to education, health, livelihood and social security.

Our objective is to work on various issues like climate change, rights and wealth since as indigenous women we are the primary custodians and holders of traditional knowledge of our lands and natural resources in defense of mother earth.

Paran has been working on protecting and conserving their lands from harsh impacts of climate change.

Paran inhabit Ololulung'a region in Narok county which hosts the MAU forest in KENYA which is the largest water tower. In our work one of our major impact in entire country/Africa are a variety of key areas including mobilizing women to compact the severe impacts of climate change, our efforts have had a multidimensional impact in areas of human rights, indigenous rights education and especially environmental conservation which as in many other rural areas in the south has become a major issue. Our main target groups are indigenous women; however, its other secondary targets have been the primary /secondary schools in our local jurisdiction area where we carry out environmental education.



NAIYAN- Paran Women

Groups director says “Lets us rebuild. Let’s us retool. Let us response, because this is perhaps the most apt reminder of what we must fight for in the multilateral system in the global, national and local community of people. We can do it, work together, but we need to respect each other, to see each other, to hear each other and work together. |In Our local villages’ solidarity is the only option’’, as in our dream was to unite around our common goal to support the world’s most vulnerable people who are women and young children’s.

ACTIVITIES FROM JANUARY – MAY 2021;

- **Smaller enterprises;**

Paran has joint group trees nurseries that is used for reforestation initiatives and income generating activity from sale of seedlings to other stakeholders including KEFRI, District Office’s, Netfund and NCCRPN network. We particularly plant indigenous tree seedlings amounting to around 100,000 seedlings spread across the 64 member groups grown the



last 5years. The tree nurseries have been



activities that generate income to women groups and individual members, this activities for the nurseries establishment and extension have been mentals for indigenous rights education and especially environmental preservation which as in many other rural areas being a menace and concern. The groups coming together has been assisted to develop skills for forests restoration projects hence strengthening micro enterprises through livelihood support.

- ***Environment programme***

At the core of our work is advocacy and initiatives on environmental conservation. We undertake training session on green business opportunities through; reforestation, fuel efficient -energy saving cooking-stoves and briquettes to replace wood fuel. We have been part of indigenous women advocacy for climate justice at national and international levels. This initiative saves trees, forests and dramatically reduce air pollution caused by cooking with pure wood or charcoal. The introduction of wood saving jiko,s/stoves become a game changer both in our own households/families as women where no tree

again has been fell down for fire woods. From January to March 2021, our umbrella mainly in the built Paran Resource Centre made about 500 stoves/jikos which have been sold to friends in Narok South and Kilgoris subcounty.







- **Paran Women Resource Centre;**

Paran women group has a Resource Centre that is hub for its group members to convene and discuss issues and jointly carry out its training initiatives. This resource Centre also serves as training Centre(hall) for other stakeholders as income generating activity. All the member groups meet on a monthly bases through a selection of representations from each group derived from Paran W G umbrella topographical area of coverage. During trainings, we learn and exchange ideas, stories as form of learning from other women who have similar challenges hence learning from each other. During the weekly forums in the individual's groups, ideas are exchange on how to make the simple energy efficient cook-stoves and nurseries can be extended thus reaching the Quartley target of 100,000 indigenous tree seedlings.





- ***Teamwork through beadwork/crafting***

We create community groups made up mostly of women who support each other, save together and learn together the work of beading/crafting as it's a born traditional indigenous knowledge-based.

We train them to develop small businesses that make the most of their skills and potential. After that we provide our group members with access to credit so they can grow or start their small businesses in their own homes.





N/B; Due to Covid-19 protocol and lifestyles changes, we have decided as a women forum that our women to be trained on how to use Zoom meeting through the modern devices like; Mobile phone, laptops etc.



- *Connecting with Indigenous women networks in Kenya and beyond*



Since 2015, we have been engaging in exchange visits to connect with other Indigenous women from Kenyas' counties of Marsabit, West Pokot, Isiolo and in Narok with the goal to exchange and share experiences on best practices in agriculture, craft making, leadership etc. We are also proud to have improved our women's group management capacity and strengthened our group members micro enterprises through improved skills and livelihood support. We have managed to engage with the local leadership and held a women's day celebration to highlight role of women in development. This has made our group more visible to local government and other stakeholders





ACTIVITIES/TESTIMONIES TOWARDS END OF JULY 2021;

On 2019, Paran women group leader Naiyan Kiplagat was awarded by the Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF) "*Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life*" for her leadership efforts that has had multidimensional impact in the areas of human rights; indigenous rights education and especially environmental preservation, which, as in many other rural areas in the south, has become a major issue in her country. She has assisted indigenous people to develop the skills enabling them to be climate defenders by planting over 100,000 INDIGENOUS trees since the beginning of the women umbrella. This has led to other women groups coming up with same activities and togetherness.

In her own rights NAIYAN SAYS; which is a Testimony:



In 10 years, we have been able to restore more than 10,000 ha of forest landscape in the Mau region. We have planted more than 1 million trees.

In less than a year, Paran trainers have instructed 215 women in five different villages on skills as varied as poultry rearing, tree nursery establishment, briquette making and conservation agriculture etc... It's a small contribution to the hundreds of incomes generating initiatives created. It's work she has every intention of continuing. "The women I work with face many problems – poverty, lack of education, inadequate life skills – but by the time they graduate I find them strong and enabled," says Naiyan. "When they start to earn money, they improve their position in the family and in society."

Through trainings on management with the help of well-wishers', Paran members have improved women's groups management capacity and strengthen group members on micro finance enterprises through improved skills and livelihood supports. This has given the umbrella members to engage positively with the local leadership and national leaders too. Our voices have been recognized, mentioned at all levels. This enabled us to be broader, enlighten and creative hence lobbying for resources equal distribution and protection within Narok county and beyond.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND KEY ORGANIZATIONS PARTNERSHIPS;

- **FIMI LEADERSHIP AWARD 2020**

We are grateful for the award because it has made our work more visible to local leadership and different actors that indigenous women are change agents. This helps us in accessing decision making spaces., we are grateful and FIMI should continue the award. Our umbrella group works towards shifting gender dynamics by strengthening grassroots women access to resources, political participation and women voices in policy decisions/making. Our work contributes to achieving UN sustainable goals agenda 2030 like; SDG goal13 climate action, SDG goal 10 Reducing inequalities, SDG goal 12 promoting sustainable consumption and production amongst others.

- **INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS WOMEN FORUM – FIMI
INDIGENOUS WOMEN FUND – AYNi**

The purpose of the fund was Empowering and strengthening indigenous women and youth leadership capacity. We had a training program for Paran women groups members and other women groups in Ololunga on group dynamics, leadership and management (financial and human resources. In some parts of the Paran W G umbrella; in agriculture since we experienced dry spells, we introduced sustainable practice with water harvesting and use of post-harvest waste from animal feeds using some amount of funds from this donation. This has improved food security in our community by ensuring we have good harvests for subsistence and selling waste for livestock feed.

- **PARTNERSHIP WITH INDIGENOUS INFORMATION NETWORK- KENYA**

Through the partnership with Indigenous Information Network Kenya*IINK*, the organization Paran Women has managed to train girls on reproductive health, early marriages and girls rights.

They have also trained women their rights and empowered them with income generating activities, conservation, climate change adaptation and mitigation and food security through traditional knowledge. They have made the organization known and network with more partners and stakeholders.

- **PARTNERSHIPS FROM NETFUND REFORESTATION PROGRAM**

This initiative saves trees, forests and dramatically reduce air pollution caused by cooking with pure wood or charcoal, reforestation initiatives. Netfund bought 40,000 indigenous trees from the Paran umbrella body hence doing the Maasai Mau restoration project.

- **BASETITANIUM/NCCRPN 2021 MAASAI-MAU PROJECTS**

The partnership from BASETITANIUM -Kwale county through the linkages from NarokCountyConservationResourcesProtectionNetwork, gave the opportunity for Paran umbrella selling about 7000 indigenous tree seedlings for the Maasai-Mau restoration projects which runs up to Dec 2021.

- **CREAW FUND PROJECTS**

The fund helps the Paran umbrella body in below achievements;

1. Violence in homes has reduced because of women implementing what they got from trainings
2. Income generating activities has empowered women thus help their girls needs
3. Girl's mentorship has improved our girls' behaviors.
4. Through women's empowerment on trainings, they are now in a position of identifying needy girls and funds for their fees and other needs to stop early marriages.
5. Provision of dignity kits for both women and girls

WWW.paranwomen.org