

Report on the Training of Trainers for Endorois Women, May 2018



Endorois women at Lake Bogoria

From 8-11 May 2018, the Women and ESCR Working Group and the Strategic Litigation Working Group of ESCR-Net collaborated with our member, the Endorois Welfare Council (EWC), in facilitating a workshop on human rights principles and organizing for Endorois women leaders at Lake Bogoria in Kenya.

The workshop consisted of trainings on technical issues and skills development, strategic discussions, and the development of inclusive demands regarding shared leadership to community leaders as well as wider human rights demands directed to government officials. The sessions were also rich in cultural traditions, prayers and music. The women present were powerful in articulating their vision for their community and charting a path forward regarding the ongoing struggle for land and natural resources. They were also very much in solidarity with each other's personal struggles.

For a slideshow of key moments at the workshop, please see:

[Slideshow of photos](#)

Background

In the 1970s, the Kenyan government evicted hundreds of Endorois families from their land around the Lake Bogoria area to create a game reserve for tourism. Following many years of struggle by the Endorois, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) delivered an unprecedented judgment recognizing that the Kenyan government had violated the Endorois' rights to religious practice, to property, to culture, to the free disposition of natural resources, and to development, under the African Charter. The Commission recommended that the government recognize rights of ownership, restitute to the Endorois their ancestral lands, compensate their losses, and ensure the Endorois benefit from the royalties and employment opportunities within the game reserve. Since then, the Endorois Welfare Council (EWC), supported by partners, including ESCR-Net members, Minority Rights Group International (legal representative in the case alongside CEMIRIDE), Dejusticia (Colombia), Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), and Hakijaami (Kenya), among others, have moved ahead with various initiatives towards the concrete implementation of the African Commission's ruling. For more information on collective implementation efforts, please see [here](#).

Following traditional rules and customs, the Endorois efforts to enforce the Commission ruling had been mainly led by men. Recently, with the support of ESCR-Net members, the community has celebrated the **growing leadership of Endorois women** in the struggle to secure their land rights. Women composed over half of community representatives at a 2015 meeting that decided to register all Endorois women, including those who marry non-Endorois, as community members. In 2016, this led to the [first workshop](#) for Endorois women leaders. The workshop in 2018 brought together many of the same participants from the women's workshop in 2016 to build on the previous strategic conversations and skills development.

Overview of the Workshop

The 2018 workshop was a training of trainers (TOT) for Endorois women committed to mobilizing their community to secure human rights and the implementation of the ACHPR decision. 34 Endorois women, including a number of youth leaders, from 15 different locations participated.

Some of the participants were experienced leaders, for example, the participants Emily Kimoi and Josphine Chepkuto are chiefs of their localities, and participant Janet Kipruto is the chair of the Endorois Women's Forum. Others had serious political aspirations, for example, to run for positions at the local county government or even Parliament. Christine Kandie and Christine Chebii from EWC who played a leading role in organizing the workshop, also led various sessions as facilitators.

The TOT aimed to:

- Reinforce women's leadership and support women to conduct secondary trainings or dialogues as well as play a role as organizers within their own communities, helping to shape inclusive demands and shared leadership in ongoing advocacy and decision-making towards implementation of the ACHPR decision, and beyond.
- Better equip women and their communities, to advocate with various levels of government

- to demand their rights to education, public health care, water and sanitation, among others.
- Create a network of support among emerging women leaders, as well as strong ties with fellow Kenyan ESCR-Net members and allies.

The meeting was interpreted (English/Kiswahili) and key materials translated (English/Kiswahili).

Throughout the workshop, the women participants were very engaged as evident from the intense collective discussions during sessions as well as the focused questioning and reflections.

Highlights from the sessions

8 May



Endorois women in a discussion on women rights defenders

The TOT commenced on the evening of May 8th with a discussion facilitated by Salome Nduta from the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders of Kenya regarding **the security and protection of women rights defenders at home, in their communities and also in relation to non- state actors and the government.** Via an energetic discussion and practical exercises, she led the women through an understanding of leadership roles and related challenges, provided concrete security advice in the cases of verbal abuse, assault, rape, murder, and targeting of family, and assured the participants that the Coalition will stand by them if they are threatened because of the work they do as rights defenders.

“If the man reads the bible to you (to justify authority or violence), read the constitution to him. You will face challenges, but we must stand against the challenges as women.” - Salome Nduta

9 May

The following day the women present discussed [the history of the Endorois struggle and the current state of implementation of the ACHPR ruling.](#) This session was skillfully facilitated by Christine Kandie from EWC.

Jane Meriwas, chairwoman of the Samburu Women’s Trust, then facilitated a dynamic and inspiring session on women’s leadership. During this session women shared personal stories of adversity, resilience and triumph, as well as key strategic approaches to women’s leadership in indigenous communities. Jane Meriwas emphasized the importance of working in solidarity and extended an invitation to the Endorois women to come and speak with women in her community.



Jane Meriwas, Samburu Women’s Trust

When discussing challenges, women shared that between work and family responsibilities, they carry a very heavy burden. Domestic violence was also mentioned as an issue. Young women expressed that their lack of access to education, understanding of basic rights, and employment opportunities are holding them back. In terms of political participation and leadership, Endorois women shared that participating in politics can be challenging due to

“As women we should never fear positions of leadership.”- workshop participant

“I have a dream: to be seated in the Kenyan parliament to represent the Endorois.” - Christine Kandie, EWC

cultural barriers, gender stereotypes and lack of resources, among other things. Yet, despite all the challenges, the women participants expressed a real desire to participate in decisions that affected them and their families. One participant expressed

that when she is a leader in the community, her daughter and other girls will know this is a possibility, and this is the key to strengthening the position of women.

These sessions were supported by workshops materials in Kiswahili and English including a [Manual on Gender and Community Development: The Role of Endorois Women in Safeguarding Community Rights](#) developed by EWC, and a [Primer on Human Rights and Women's Leadership](#) developed by ESCR-Net.

In a session on women's leadership in practice, Christine Kandie and James Kimaru, Games Warden of Lake Bogoria, provided an overview of the **Lake Bogoria Grant Committee** in relation to revenue sharing. (The Endorois receive 10% of all tourist revenue received from the Lake Bogoria Game Reserve, and this Committee makes decisions regarding disbursement). Both speakers then addressed technical questions from participants on issues ranging from decision-making processes, including gender representation, in the context of disbursements; priorities for spending disbursements received; the need for increased community control over revenue (in the context of conditionalities dictated by the government); and transparency. Many of the women heard of these disbursements for the first time. This sparked a conversation regarding adequate access to information.

During the day, a national news channel interviewed women participants and ran a story on the Endorois land struggle.



Christine Kandie from the EWC being interviewed for a news story

The women found time between sessions to handcraft traditional bead jewellery, which they then shared with each other along with lessos (scarves), bringing joy and a sense of intimacy to the gathering, and strengthening relationships of trust amongst themselves.

10 May



Faith Alubbe, KHRC

On May 10th, Faith Alubbe from the Kenya Human Rights Commission, an ESCR-Net member led vibrant sessions on **human rights principles and constitutional standards** bringing the abstract to life by concretely linking every day issues faced by the women in the room to the human rights framework. She also took the women participants through a **basic human rights advocacy training** helping them identify clear advocacy forums, opportunities, and strategies. Pauline Vata from Hakijaami, another ESCR-Net member, facilitated a technical session on **community registration and community land registration** making complex legal standards accessible to the participants. She emphasized the role of women in actively monitoring and engaging in the registration process. Due to the new community land law, the next community census and land registration process will be very soon in 2019 and the community needs to be prepared so that it can effectively protect the rights of the community. Both Faith and Pauline extended invitations to the Endorois women to continue to work together.

“A woman that is not poor is the one who know her rights!” -workshop participant



Pauline Vata, Hakijaami

At the end of the day, James Kimaru organized a visit to the Lake Bogoria Game reserve, the ancestral lands of the Endorois from which they have been evicted. It was clear from participant reactions that the lake is of great spiritual significance to the Endorois and considered a place of healing. The Endorois cultural center, also located there, and which the participants visited, has a 3 D map of the Endorois territory.

11 May

On the last day of the workshop, Commissioner Chivusia from the Kenya National Human Rights Commission, presented on **how to engage with various levels of the government in relation to the human rights to education, health, work, water and sanitation.**



Commissioner Chivusia, Kenya National Human Rights Commission

Also, in the course of the morning, Christine Chebii from EWC and Doris, a youth leader, led the women through a democratic process whereby the women collectively developed and voted on resolutions to present to eight key Endorois leaders including board members and community elders, who attended later that afternoon. Of the leaders present, seven were men and one was a woman.

“The knowledge and skills you have acquired here- go back to your communities and share with other women. This will be like planting seedlings- they will grow into flowers and we will advance stronger as a community.” EWC board member



Endorois women preparing the resolutions

The resolutions were presented by Fancy, a youth leader, who referenced the 2/3rd gender rule of the Kenyan constitution (not more than two thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender) to reinforce resolutions on women’s participation. The resolutions centered primarily on gender equality with a focus on participation in the political sphere of the community via key committees, and decision-making processes; land ownership; economic development; capacity building; benefit sharing and access to information. Read all the resolutions [here](#) or in Annex 2.

The board members and other key leaders accepted the resolutions and committed their support in effecting the resolutions in practice. The woman representative on the board strongly spoke out in encouragement of women’s leadership.

At the closing everyone watched a slideshow capturing key highlights at the workshop, and a bi-lingual video (in English and Kiswahili) produced during the TOT where participants shared their views on the importance of women’s leadership.

The workshop ended with a beautiful traditional ceremony organized by the Endorois women, as well as concrete commitments towards shared leadership between men and women in the Endorois struggle to implement the ACHPR ruling and realize their basic human rights.

Annex 1: Outcomes and Next Steps

Key outcomes

- Increased awareness of relevant constitutional standards and human rights principles

Following the sessions on human rights and constitutional standards, participants referenced particular constitutional provisions (for example the 2/3 gender inclusion rule) as well as identified certain situations as human rights violations, for example the lack of transparency in benefit sharing arrangements. They also took human rights principles into account, for example, participation, equality and access to information, while developing the resolutions.

- Increased understanding amongst Endorois women leaders of the Endorois struggle for land and natural resources

As evident from discussions in the course of the workshop. For example, women referenced particular recommendations from the African Commission decision or referred to implementation related developments to reinforce points they were making.

- An informal network of women leaders in solidarity in relation to land rights struggles.
- An informal network of Kenyan organizations supporting EWC with the case implementation process and beyond

The National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders of Kenya, Samburu Woman's Trust, Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) and Hakijaami, all organizations in Kenya, expressed solidarity with the Endorois at the workshop and interest in continuing to work together. In concrete terms, KHRC is currently working with EWC on a joint proposal. Jane Meriwas from the Samburu Women's Trust has invited a representative of EWC to be part of a key indigenous leaders network and has invited Endorois women to visit Samburu lands.

- Creation of a more participatory model of implementation.

Following the workshop in 2016, a number of women have been included in various committees relating to implementation of the case. The resolutions from this workshop (see below), accepted by community leaders, demonstrate a desire among the women for even greater gender parity in decision making relating to implementation of the case.

- Deepening connection between diverse struggles.

Between the Samburu and Endorois, for example.

- Building the sustainability of the struggle

Through the inclusion of a number of youth leaders in the workshop, and a commitment by the women leaders present as well as the community leaders who attended on the last day, to support young women leaders.

Next Steps

- Advance the resolutions
- Consolidate alliances strengthened at the workshop.
- Finalize a short fact sheet on lessons from collective implementation efforts related to the ACHPR case, with a focus on both direct and indirect impacts, including the gradual emergence of women’s leadership.
- Prepare a project proposal by EWC regarding the need for increased awareness amongst community members on the issue of revenue sharing.

To learn more about key discussions at the workshop, please see:

- [Manual on Gender and Community Development: The Role of Endorois Women in Safeguarding Community Rights](#)
- [Primer on Human Rights and Women’s Leadership](#)
- [Video](#)

Annex 2: Resolutions by Endorois women presented to the EWC board

Resolutions from the Endorois women

*Training of Trainers
9-11 May, 2018
Lake Bogoria, Kenya*

During 9-11 May 2018, in Lake Bogoria, we, 34 Endorois women, gathered together to discuss women’s rights and leadership, some of the main challenges we face as Endorois women, and our vision for our community. The following are the resolutions that were decided collectively by us all, to respectfully present to the members of the Board.

We respectfully request the Board to consider the following Resolutions:

1. Three women in the Board within the next 2 months.
2. Create conditions for women to participate (women representative should be given information; if a woman cannot participate at a meeting, ensure there is another woman to take her place at that meeting; the Board should give information to the elected woman, so she can effectively participate).
3. Application of 2/3 constitutional standard of gender inclusion to the Community Land Management Committee.

4. The EWC is an umbrella for our community. We would like to ensure its sustainability over time by providing at least 5% of the 10% for operational costs to be held in trust by the community.
5. The board should assist women products in markets, for example, beads. (Assistance to access markets).
6. Women should be funded to train other women. Capacity building is required for women to effectively participate.
7. Women should be included in every development committee and all decision-making processes.
8. Women should be included in the implementation of the Endorois case (for example, when Endorois are represented at the county, national, regional and international levels).
9. Endorois women should be considered for employment opportunities, specially youth.
10. Annual celebration day for the Endorois (commemoration of the case).
11. The cultural center should be managed by women.
12. Women should be included in the community land register and have equal access to and ownership of community and private land.
13. Women should be included in the 10% share. We want at least 1% to be given to the women forum for income generating activities.
14. Access to information from leadership to the grassroots and community members.