



**INCLUSIVE GREEN ECONOMY
AFRICA**

NETWORK-EAST

Kampala, Uganda • Website: www.igen-ea.org • Email: contact@igen-ea.org



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**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY 2024: EAST AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS SHOULD
FOSTER GENDER JUSTICE BY ENHANCING WOMEN’S ACCESS TO LAND,
AFFORDABLE CLEAN ENERGY**

On this International Women’s Day 2024, the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) calls upon East African governments to invest in green economic sectors that drive women’s participation in the economy.

IGEN-EA is a coalition of civil society organisations and private sector entities which are united around a common mission of promoting inclusive green economic activities that conserve the environment while addressing human rights and climate change concerns in East Africa. The network undertakes research, policy advocacy and stakeholder awareness raising to promote green economic activities in sectors such as clean energy, natural resources management, organic agriculture and fisheries, and tourism. IGEN-EA, which has members from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, is currently hosted by Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO).

Today, IGEN-EA urges East African governments to increase investments in green economic sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, clean energy, tourism and others that employ the majority of women. The network members are also calling on the East African governments to address barriers to women’s participation in green economic sectors.

Ms. Janepher Baitwamasa of Navigators for Development Association (NAVODA)-Uganda, a member organisation of IGEN-EA says, "Women in East Africa are still faced with a challenge of land ownership, which greatly hampers their earning power from organic agriculture. In Uganda, only 26% of women own titled land while only 25% and 33% own agricultural land in Kenya and Tanzania respectively. In Tanzania, only 9% of women solely own land, with the majority holding joint ownership of land.

The issue of low levels of women owning land is deeply rooted in our traditions, where land inheritance typically favors men. This dominance extends to decision-making regarding land use, leaving women with limited control. East African governments must work with other stakeholders to increase women's ownership of land so that they can better participate in organic agriculture."

Ms. Lois Sabila from the Oil Refinery Residents Association, a member organisation of IGEN-EA says, "Women's participation in the clean energy sector remains low. In Uganda for instance, only 28% of women work in the distributed renewable energy [DRE] sector that covers the off-grid sector. In Kenya, only 41% work in the DRE sector while in Tanzania, only 20% are employed in the energy sector. Some businesses in the distributed renewable energy sector such as selling small solar systems, bigger solar home systems and others do not require high levels of technical skills or high capital requirements. However, because women often aren't economically empowered, their participation in renewable energy ventures is limited. East African governments should provide special funds and skilling to enhance women's participation in the clean energy sector."

Ms. Barbara Kembabazi of AFIEGO adds, "It will also be recalled that women bear the brunt of limited access to clean cooking energy. Majority of women in East Africa cook with firewood, which harms their health and takes away time they could have used to engage in green economic activities. East African governments should provide women with clean cooking options to foster gender justice."

On her part, Ms. Hellen Lubowa, from the Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA), a member organisation of IGEN-EA, says, "Women in the tourism sector face challenges such as limited access to training and capacity building opportunities. There is a need for policies and programmes that promote gender equality and empower women to fully participate in and benefit from the tourism industry."

In addition, Ms. Rehema Peters of Partnerships for a Green Future-Tanzania says, "Women's participation in the economy is hindered by poor childcare systems. A lot of women fail to maximise their potential as they need to divide their attention between professional and domestic duties. East African governments should mandate employers to put in place childcare facilities to enhance women's participation in green economic activities".

IGEN-EA remains committed to advocating for gender equality and women's participation in key green economic sectors. We urge the East African governments to take decisive action to ensure that women are not left behind while they are greening their countries' economies.

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For more information please contact:

Ms. Diana Nabiruma
Senior Communications Officer, AFIEGO
dnabiruma@afiego.org

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