



What is the Kilimanjaro initiative?

The Kilimanjaro Initiative is a **rural women's mobilisation** from across Africa towards an iconic moment at the foot of Mt Kilimanjaro in October 2016. With access to and control over land and natural resources as an entry point, **four** regional caravans are expected to depart simultaneously from the **North, South, East and West**, culminating in a **mass African rural women's assembly and a symbolic ascent** by a delegation of women. The women plan to proclaim a charter of principles and demands specifically on women's access to and control over their land.

The Kilimanjaro Initiative was conceived during a meeting of rural women and civil society organisations in 2012, held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. This initiative aims to create space for rural women to be able to participate in decision making processes about issues dear to them. Mt. Kilimanjaro powerfully symbolises the challenge of their climb, and represents a starting point to spreading a message throughout Africa. The year 2016 coincides with the end of the MDGs, marking the first year of the SDGs, and the need to ensure continued support for women's equal access to and control over land.

With 2016 declared by the 26th African Union Summit as "Africa Year of Human Rights with particular focus on the Rights of Women", coupled with the transition from MDGs into SDGs, our focus on rural women's right to land and natural resources towards a food and nutritional secure continent could have never been timelier. The Kilimanjaro initiative offers a unique window of opportunity to unify and amplify the struggles of rural women in a politically correct climate.

Objectives

- To strengthen the agency and movement of rural women in claiming and defending their land and natural resource rights in Africa
- To engender political will amongst national governments, donor and regional institutions to implement an all-inclusive African women's charter.
- To mobilise and support the participation of 100,000 rural women in the Kilimanjaro initiative in at least 20 countries in Africa
- To raise awareness on existing frameworks and safeguards around Large scale land based investments and demand for their application in securing legitimate tenure rights of rural women in Africa

What are the key demands /asks?

- ❖ Fully implement the AU Guiding principles on large scale land based investment and the Tenure Guidelines on land, fisheries and forests. Implementation should be done through participatory, inclusive mechanisms that prioritise the rights and needs of legitimate tenure users, especially women.
- ❖ Ensure free, prior and informed consent for all communities affected by land transfers. This should include the fair and equitable participation of local communities, especially excluded and marginalised groups such as women, youth, children, minorities, the elderly and disabled.
- ❖ Review public policies and projects that incentivise land grabbing, then support policies that prioritise the needs of small-scale food producers – particularly women – and sustainable land use.
- ❖ Regulate businesses involved in land deals so that they are fully accountable for respecting human rights, tenure rights and environmental, social and labour standards. This includes ensuring that investors carry out comprehensive human rights due diligence, are transparent and are fully accountable throughout all their operations at home and abroad.
- ❖ Strengthen the Africa Land Policy Centre resource capacity to implement the gender strategy for the operationalisation of the framework and guidelines on land in Africa.
- ❖ Strengthen mechanism for collection of gender disaggregated data on land and natural resource rights,
- ❖ Enact and enforce laws that secure participation and representation in decision making in land and natural resource governance from local to national level.

Key Tools for Organising...

- ❖ **Rural women's assemblies** drawing on traditions of African community dialogue (of course amended to be events for and run by women);
- ❖ **Women's land tribunals/hearings** where high profile panellists will hear, in a quasi-judicial format, about the violations of women's land and property rights, the impact of these as well as examples and proposals for solutions;
- ❖ **Identifying existing land struggles** and women's land activists and involving and supporting these struggles in a way that asserts women's land rights and builds women's movements; and
- ❖ **Long marches** may work in some countries and will be encouraged where feasible as they have been powerful expressions of people's demands in Asia and Latin America.

Key components of the project

- 1. Kilimanjaro Launch & National formations March 8th- July 2016-** Organize women's rural forums- Mini Kilimanjaro's workshop and seminars.
- 2. AU Summit Lobby July & August 2016.** Launch a Big report to capture Africa and Global media attention targeting Africa Heads of states as they meet in July Summit in Rwanda. Organise side event in the margin of the summit, and support 2000 rural women to engage in AU, SADC and ECOWAS heads of states summits attend the summit
- 3. Kilimanjaro Ascent September & October 2016.** A delegation of 16 athletic women (representing rural women_ are sent up the mountain to carry their demands (in the form of flag) to the highest summit on the continent. The charter will be handed over to UN secretary General, Chair of African Rural Women Assembly and Chair of the AU
- 4. Post Kilimanjaro (2016-2017)-** Follow-up work after the Mass rural assembly and ascent of Kilimanjaro, with national groupings taking the final charter of demands back to national level and pushing for implementation with their national leadership. This also includes engagement with regional institutions. Review and track government commitments to the AU principles work on capacity building to have them institutionalised. Increase knowledge at all levels to ensure local communities are informed when decisions on land are made.

Who can be involved and how?

The initiative targets to mobilise rural women and their organisations primarily. Individuals, National and International NGOs working with rural women are invited as support organisations to facilitate the participation of rural women in the process and final event. Donors/partners who may wish to support any of the components outlined above can do so by contacting the Inter-Agency steering group for appropriate briefing and direction.

Budgets and resourcing

A comprehensive budget has being developed by the steering group, costing the whole initiative from start to finish. The key components should form a basis for possible fundable areas. There is no common pot for funding at the moment, but some of the support organisations in the inter-agency steering group have been undertaking to support the women and their organisations to bring this far. Many areas still remain unfunded but efforts have been made to raise resources to make this dream come to fruition. Contact the steering group if you would like to support.

Coordination mechanisms

1. National convenors

These are organisations with capacity to mobilise and support the convening of rural women organisations at country level to consolidate the national formations. These will be identified by the participating organisations in consultation with the Inter-Agency steering group and the rural women's steering committee.

2. Rural Women Steering Group / Council

This comprises five (5) regional women representatives.

Northern Africa

- Morocco - Ghita Ait Ben Lmadani ait_lmadani@yahoo.fr

Eastern Africa:

- Tanzania - Flora Mathias Mlowezi Tigushefoundation@gmail.com

Central Africa

Cameroon – Augustina Takah augustinatakah@yahoo.com and Vanessa Adoko vanadok@gmail.com

West Africa

- Nigeria - Lovelyn Ejim Nnenna lovelynjim@gmail.com

Southern Africa

- Malawi - Tiwonge Gondwe (c/o chikumbutso.ngosi@actionaid.org)

3. Inter-Agency steering group

This group comprises Oxfam, ILC, PLAAS, ActionAid, WILDAF, Tanzania Gender Networking programme, Kenya land alliance among others. Members meet regularly to provide strategic steer and support to the rural women. This is currently convened by ActionAid. Contact david.barisa@actionaid.org or Grace.Ananda@actionaid.org; grace for enquiries.

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