

COASTAL LIVELIHOODS AND MANGROVES PROJECT

Strengthening Community Rights and Coastal Resilience in Tanzania

VISION FOR IMPACT

- Mangrove forest cover: **110,000 hectares**
- Carbon mitigation potential: **37.2 million** tons of CO_2 equivalent
- Coastal population: **15.5 million**

The Challenge

Tanzania hosts East Africa's largest and most ecologically important mangrove forests, supporting biodiversity, fisheries, climate resilience, and coastal livelihoods. Mangrove forests in Tanzania span 14 coastal administrative districts, from Mkinga in the north to Mtwara in the south, covering approximately **110,000 hectares**. These carbon-rich forests are estimated to store roughly **37.2 million tons of CO_2e**, making them an important carbon sink and critical for mitigating climate change.

Coastal ecosystems and resources (including mangroves) play a critical role in supporting the livelihoods of 25% of Tanzania's coastal population, which totals **15.5 million people**. Ecosystems services provided by mangroves have been valued at **TZS 4.8 trillion (USD 2.1 billion)** per year.

Despite these benefits, mangrove degradation continues due to overexploitation, competing land uses, population growth, and governance challenges. Alongside these challenges, communities living alongside these ecosystems often lack sufficient tenure security, participation in decision-making, and equitable access to conservation benefits, reducing incentives for sustainable stewardship.

Without stronger community rights and governance systems, conservation investments risk being unsustainable and unable to deliver lasting environmental and social outcomes.

The Opportunity

Tanzania is pursuing ambitious climate, biodiversity, and coastal resilience goals under national laws and policies, including the development of the National Mangrove Management and Development Strategy, 2025 – 2035 and the review of the Climate Change Responses Strategy, coupled with international commitments. At the same time, growing interest in blue carbon initiatives and nature-based solutions is creating new opportunities for investment in mangrove conservation.

To ensure these investments are effective and equitable, active community participation in mangrove forest management and in tenure rights and governance systems must be strengthened. This is a critical moment to align conservation, climate action, and community development objectives.



Landesa

This initiative in Tanzania represents one of nine countries engaged in Landesa's Coastal Livelihoods and Mangroves Project.

Landesa's Contribution

Landesa works to ensure that communities are recognized as essential partners in mangrove conservation through strengthened tenure security, inclusive governance, and equitable resource management. We are currently operating pilot programs for district and village-level government officials and community members in the districts of Kilwa and Lindi.



Key Interventions Include

Pilot trainings for women, men and youth on gender equality and their rights and duties in mangrove ecosystem management

Trainings in four communities in Kilwa and Lindi districts will help strengthen collaboration between communities and government institutions both at local and national levels and influence policy and legal reforms necessary to improve mangrove governance and stewardship.

Assessing and addressing land tenure-related barriers affecting mangrove conservation and restoration

Secure tenure rights encourage sustainable use of land and reduce pressure on other resources, including mangroves. Effective implementation of land use plans and enhanced gender equality and social inclusion can improve livelihoods for coastal communities.

Support policy and legal reforms

Landesa's climate and land tenure experts will advocate for policy dialogue and legal reforms that improve recognition of community rights, gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) and sustainable mangrove ecosystem management.

Strengthen national-level mangrove dialogue platform

Tanzania's national mangrove dialogue platform convenes government institutions, civil society, communities, and other stakeholders to collaborate on understanding of sustainable mangrove forest management and development. This multilateral dialogue platform helps build a knowledge base around mangrove management and related issues, offers a forum to discuss policy and programmatic interventions, creates a venue for community voices to be heard, and facilitates implementation and monitoring of Tanzania's national mangrove strategy. By building the capacity of this critical platform, we can provide broad-based support for mangrove management at national and local levels.

Expected Results

Improved women, men, and youth stewardship in mangrove ecosystem resources managements.

State agendas and commitments on sustainable mangrove ecosystem management prioritize livelihood development and community stewardship.

Enhanced institutional accountability and coordination over sustainable mangrove ecosystem management.

Greater resilience of coastal livelihoods and ecosystems.

By placing tenure security at the centre of conservation, Landesa is helping create a future where thriving mangrove ecosystems support resilient communities, sustainable livelihoods, and lasting climate solutions.



Landesa

For additional information about our work, please contact info@landesa.org.
Visit our website at www.landesa.org.