

Sustainable Agricultural Livelihood Restoration, Rehabilitation and Resilience in Kenya Training Manual

3.5.1: SUB-MODULE 1: WEAVING

Weaving is the intertwining or interlacing of strands of material to make a whole object, such as a piece of fabric or a basket. Weaving creates materials into three-dimensional artefacts, such as baskets, mats, mesh bags, or even furniture. Basketry is made from a variety of fibrous or pliable materials—anything that will bend and form a shape. Examples include pine, straw, willow, oak, wisteria, forsythia, vines, stems, animal hair, hide, grasses, thread, and fine wooden splints. There are many applications for basketry, from simple mats to hot air balloon gondolas. Many Indigenous peoples in Kenya are renowned for their basket-weaving techniques.

In the process of weaving, the weaver will first take the raw materials and start by shaping them into the desired shape. They will then use either straw, plant fibres, or animal hair to create the desired finished product. Secondly, they will start weaving the material together using traditional basket-making techniques. Finally, they will add any decorations or finishes that they want before completing the basket.



Weaving in Marsabit using palm leaf



Basket weaving in Turkana

Further reading

Carson E., Evans R. and Kate F. (2015). Beaded Jewellery: Stringing Techniques: Skills, Tools, and Materials for Making Handcrafted Jewellery. A Storey BASICS® Title Paperback; P88; Publisher Storey Publishing; ISMN: 9781612124827.