

THE NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST

BI-ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY TO JUNE 2021





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NRT's mission is to develop resilient community conservancies that transform lives, secure peace and conserve natural resources

Our Mission

NRT is a membership organization owned and led by the 40 diverse community conservancies it serves in northern and coastal Kenya. Since its inception, NRT has been making significant strides in developing resilient community conservancies that transform lives, promote peace, and conserve natural resources, in line with its mission.

Three pillars underpin NRT's approach to conservation resilience:

 **Good Governance:** community-driven decision-making that results in strong community ownership, equitable benefit distribution, and transparent and accountable conservancy boards and administration.

 **Effective Management:** the proficient administration of conservancies and the successful implementation of programs.

 **Financial Viability:** sufficient and reliable funding for current and future conservation operations.

Previously, the NRT Sustainability Plan anticipated conservancies 'graduating' out of NRT as they became financially self-sufficient; however, the COVID pandemic has shown that even the most established conservancies with large tourism earnings are vulnerable when tourism declines. Additionally, new and significant governance concerns have emerged as conservancy revenue grows and leadership changes.

Therefore, rather than seeing conservancies graduate from NRT and make place for new ones, we see conservancy resilience as a long-term collaboration in which NRT's input and support to a conservancy fluctuates based on the specific needs, capacity, and challenges of each of our members.

While financial viability is the ultimate goal for our member conservancies, experience has revealed that conservancy resilience is not linear, and NRT's mentorship role is crucial in the long run. Currently, NRT is developing specific workstreams aimed at conservation resilience.

NRT has been conducting a series of Conservancy Capacity Assessments that will allow it and the member conservancies to track each conservancy's progress toward resilience in a systematic and objective manner.

The Capacity Assessment Conservancy Resilience Assessment Framework, which is currently under development, is designed to track progress in good governance, management effectiveness, and financial viability, as well as provide detailed data to support targeted action plans aimed at increasing conservancy capacity.

This framework will be based on NRT's bespoke governance and management effectiveness tool, the 'Governance Index,' as well as other pilots on conservancy capacity assessment conducted in collaboration with Fauna and Flora International (FFI).

Thanks to the generous support of donors and

partners, since 2015, NRT has implemented **135** conservancy-funded development projects in its member conservancies, spanning **51,050** square kilometers of land, and benefiting over **175,000** people while also contributing to the creation of a sustainable future.

NRT will continue to work in an environment where we endeavor to implement initiatives that benefit people and wildlife in the context of climate change and poverty.

This approach to conservancy resilience while maintaining the hope of financial viability for the community conservancy model, will ideally lead NRT into the next chapter of its existence, ensuring the continued success and growth of this vital model which empowers communities to protect natural resources that support their livelihoods, while also conserving the wildlife and habitats of essential landscapes and seascapes.



NRT will continue to work in an environment where we endeavor to implement initiatives that benefit people and wildlife in the context of climate change and poverty.



Clement Mwangi

GROWTH, IMPACT AND LESSONS

From the CEO's Desk

The first six months of 2021 have been an exciting time for NRT as the organization continues to grow and define itself within the complex landscapes of northern and coastal Kenya and amongst the challenges presented by climate change, low rainfall, pressure on wildlife and livestock. To rise to the occasion and to meet the challenges facing existing conservancies as well as to create greater connectivity across landscapes and communities, NRT has decided to take on a more regional approach to conservancy support. As we continue to grow into new areas and partner with new communities, we will be applying the regional model successfully implemented at NRT coast. Regional bases will allow NRT to move its support closer to the conservancies themselves, assisting conservancies to take the lead in implementation and staying closely connected to the site-specific context our member conservancies.

The Covid-19 pandemic put our endurance to the test in 2020, exacerbating the ever-present problems we face operating in vulnerable environments in northern and coastal Kenya. 2020, on the other hand, was not a squandered opportunity! It refined us and taught us invaluable lessons.

We marched into the new year as the globe welcomed in 2021, leveraging our experiences from the previous year to better position ourselves to support the conservancies in achieving their developmental goals. We made a conscious decision to proceed with courage and a determination to succeed against all odds despite the ever-mutating challenges we would encounter in our NRT journey, and it paid off, as you will discover while reading through this half-year report! 2021 has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt, that even in the middle of a debilitating pandemic, progress can be made.

I am delighted to inform you that NRT launched The Northern Kenya Rangeland Carbon Project, the first large-scale grasslands soil carbon offset project in the world and the first to generate verified carbon credits through modified cattle grazing patterns! Spanning **1.9** million hectares (**4.7** million acres) in northern Kenya, the project is an initiative of **14** Northern Rangelands Trust member community conservancies.



The project is accredited to an international carbon standard and is planned to capture and store **50** million tons of carbon dioxide, the equivalent of the annual emissions from over **10,000,000** cars! It will lead to the restoration of more than two million hectares of savannah grasslands in an increasingly arid region.

The purchase of carbon sequestered on community rangelands in northern Kenya will provide much-needed income to the communities while also enhancing conservation efforts.

NRT is continuously searching for innovative ideas and ways for conservancies to generate more revenue while also improving natural resource conservation. To that end, NRT funded the construction of the new Ltungia conservancy community tourism camp, to boost revenue available for community development programs and counteract the detrimental impact of the pandemic on tourism.

Since the beginning of the year, NRT has supported nature-based tourism in its member conservancies. Nature based tourism is a long lasting business model that ensures high levels of employment and promotes security for people and wildlife.

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With the outbreak of the pandemic and the resulting socioeconomic issues, much of NRT's achievement in 2021 would not have taken place without the exceptional individuals on the ground who labor day in and day out to ensure that the conservancies that comprise NRT succeed.

NRT conservancies received **110** million Kenyan shillings in the last six months (**1** million USD) This funding was disbursed through the Community Livelihood Fund (CLF) and was used to fund microfinance and education projects, ensuring that young people are educated, and capital is available to start viable household businesses, thus achieving NRT's mission of creating resilient families, communities and conservancies.

The onset of 2021 saw NRT adopt a regional strategy to conservancy support in order to be more effective. This concept, which was piloted along the coast, ensures grassroots support of conservancies while also allowing their communities to take the lead in project implementation.

NRT is collaborating with county governments to support communities and conservancies in adjusting to the new Community Land Act, passed in 2016. Westgate Community Conservancy, Kalama Community Conservancy, Il Ngwesi Community Conservancy, Ngilai Community Conservancy (Central & West), Sera Community Conservancy (Sere Olipi Group Ranch & Losesia Group Ranch) are among the conservancies involved in the new statute's implementation.

To propel conservancies in advancing toward independence, we have revamped our sustainability plan and adopted a comprehensive conservancy resilience strategy that takes a holistic approach to governance, management effectiveness, and financial viability, factors crucial to conservancies' success.

The NRT community continues to expand! **Cherab, 9,050 square-kilometer located south of Marsabit and north of Meru, recently joined NRT** and elected their board of representatives. NRT's support

of Cherab will benefit not only the residents of the conservancy, but also the countless elephants that wander the corridor between Meru and Marsabit National Parks.

NRT's community conservancy model continues to be an excellent structure for communities striving to improve their lives while simultaneously repairing and conserving the natural resources on which they rely for survival.

As we proceed into the second half of 2021, NRT will endeavor to maintain its momentum and continue to roll out and implement our integrated strategy, elevating our impact to new heights.

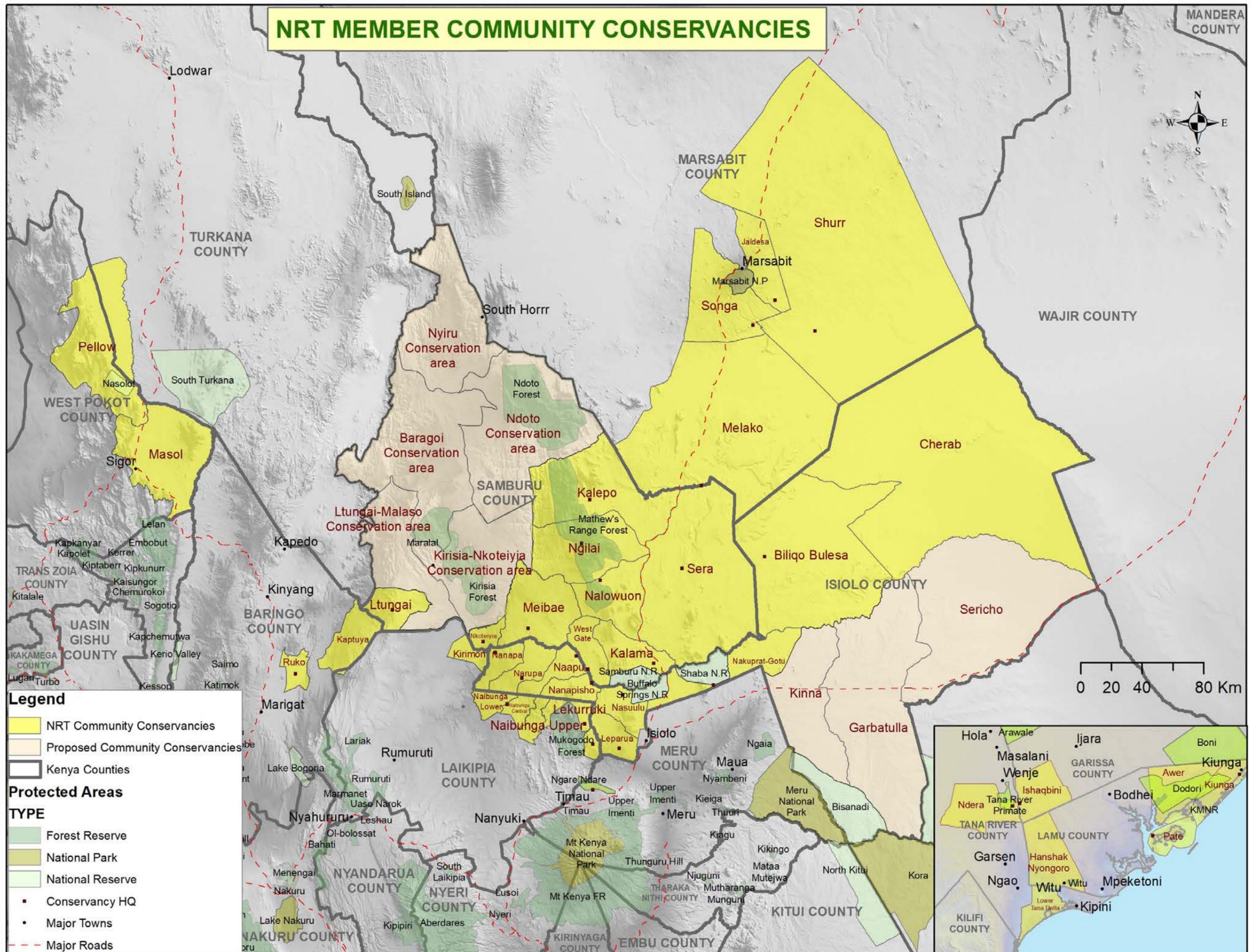
With the outbreak of the pandemic and the resulting socioeconomic issues, much of NRT's achievement in 2021 would not have taken place without the exceptional individuals on the ground who labor day in and day out to ensure that the conservancies that comprise NRT succeed.

Without the extraordinary support of our donors, the milestones that NRT has passed in 2021 and the great progress that has been made so far could not have been possible. We express our gratitude for trusting us and empowering us to continue making leaps and bounds in transforming lives, promoting peace and conserving natural resources in the Northern Kenya and Coastal regions. Your continued support and unwavering commitment to our cause is highly appreciated!

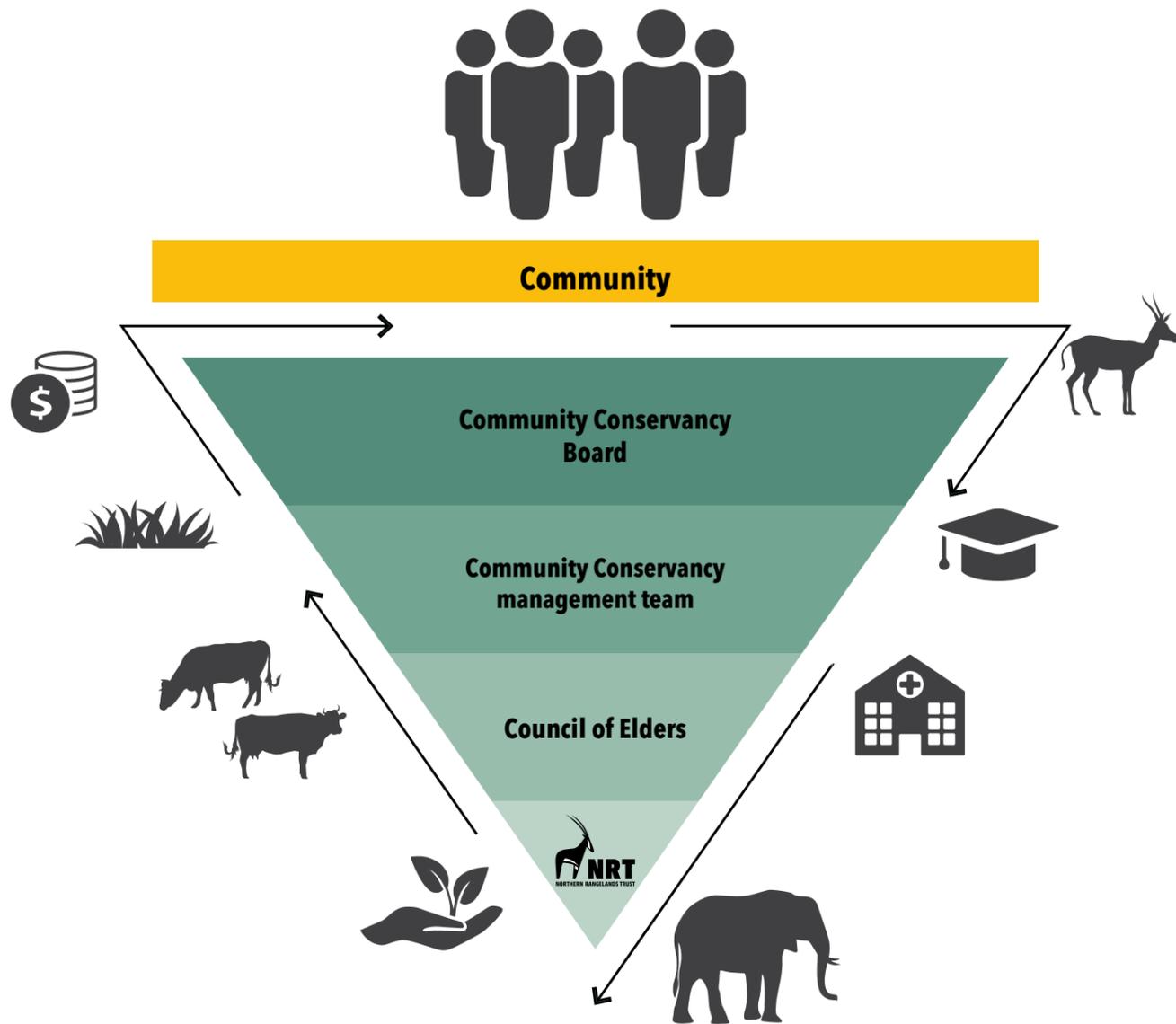
Tom Lalampaa

Sincerely,
Tom Lalampaa





HOW NRT WORKS



REPORTING BACK ON NRT'S STRATEGIC PLAN & OBJECTIVES

TRANSFORM LIVES, SECURE PEACE AND CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES

Success for NRT is achieved when the communities it supports experience a positive shift in their lives because of increased peace and the conservation of their natural resources.



Goal 1: Transform Lives

The proportion of community members reporting improved wellbeing increased to **82%** in the last six months, and **477,363** conservancy members benefited from conservation. This is significant because the pandemic negatively impacted businesses, and there was growing concern over little rainfall and its knock-on effect for people, livestock, and wildlife.

Goal 2: Secure Peace

NRT's peace program is a non-political platform that brings people in conservancies together, resulting in a safer environment for them, their families, and their livestock.

While insecurity has increased in both the coast and the north over the last six months, the presence of conservancies has made individuals living in these unsafe areas feel safer in these trying times.

When asked about their safety, **73%** of individuals in the communities said their safety and security had improved as a result of NRT's conservancy care and support.

Goal 3: Conserve Natural Resources

NRT now supports **40** community conservancies spanning **5.2** million hectares, after the Cherab Community Conservancy joined the organization.

Despite inadequate rainfall across the terrain, **61%** of the communities involved in the conservancy model had a positive attitude adjustment regarding grazing management.

NRT has continued to provide outstanding protection for major species including elephants and rhinos, with no poaching reported in NRT conservancies in the first six months of 2021.

Despite the fact that ivory poaching has been stopped, elephants continue to die as a result of human-wildlife conflict. NRT is proactively addressing the rising trend of human-wildlife conflict and, when practicable, adopting tailored interventions.

Bushmeat remains a significant threat to wildlife across parts of NRT particularly in parts of the NRT-Coast landscape and this is a critical focus of NRT's mobile anti-poaching teams together with conservancy rangers.

Monitoring & Evaluation Indicators and Targets for NRT High-Level Outcomes and Strategic Objectives

OUTCOMES	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022
Outcome 1: Transform lives	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Target	Target
1. Proportion of community members reporting improved socio-economic status	75%	73%	80%	79%	85%	83%	85%	85%	85%
2. Number of conservancy members benefiting from conservation	400,000	266,473	450,000	404,050	450,000	465,170	500,000	500,000	500,000
Outcome 2: Secure Peace									
3. Proportion of individuals in conservancies that feel safe and secure.	70%	73%	75%	75%	80%	75%	80%	80%	80%
Outcome 3: Conserve natural resources									
4. Area under community conservancy management -millions (ha)	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.5	4.5
5. Proportion of rangelands highly degraded (N1)	65%	70%	65%	Indicator updated to measure avoided degradation of rangelands on an annual basis					
6. Degree of avoided degradation in rangelands condition					Baseline	5%	6%	7%	

N1: Improved condition of Conservancy rangeland when compared to a non-conservancy area of similar ecosystem and climatic conditions, measured on a cumulative basis. Condition measured using % of live vegetation cover.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022
S01: Governance	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Target	Target
Output 1: Well-governed conservancies									
Indicator 1.1 Governance Index	55%	70%	60%	53%	50%	70%	80%	80%	80%
Output 2: Supportive Government policies, laws and financing									
Indicator 2.1 Number of policies, laws	1	1	2	1	2	0	2	2	2
Indicator 2.2 Value of Government financing -millions (KSh)	70	24	40	40	50	77	50	50	50
S02: Peace & Security	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Target	Target
Output 3: Effective peace-building									
Indicator 3.1 Number of insecurity incidents (tourist attacks and road banditry, Tribal clashes, poaching, cattle rustling)	<22	84	<50	187	<50	159	<50	<50	<50
Output 4: Effective community policing in support of government security agencies									
Indicator 4.1 Proportion of Illegally Killed Elephants (PIKE)	38%	38%	38%	31%	<45%	37%	<45%	<45%	<45%

S03: Livelihoods & Enterprises	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Target	Target
Output 5: Equitable and responsive livelihood investments									
Indicator 5.1 Value of livelihoods investments in health, water, education and infrastructure-millions (KSh)	50	52	52	111.6	52	20	52	52	52
Output 6: Successful enterprises and financial services									
Indicator 6.1 Value of commercial incomes to conservancies (tourism, livestock to markets, beadworks, carbon market etc.) - millions (KSh)	120	86.5	140	133	180	62	180	180	180
Indicator 6.2 Value of HH incomes through employment by NRT conservancies millions (KSh)	300	357	400	358	450	414.5	450	450	450
S04: Natural Resource Management & Endangered Species Conservation	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Target	Target
Output 7: Sustainable rangelands management systems									
Indicator 7.1 Area of conservancies rehabilitated and under planned grazing (cumulative Million ha)	2.7	3.5	3.94	3.5	3.94	3.5	3.94	3.94	3.94
Output 8: Flagship species and habitat conservation programmes									
Indicator 8.1 % growth rate of Rhino in Sera Rhino sanctuary population	5%	15%	5%	16%	5%	13%	5%	5%	5%
Indicator 8.2 % growth rate of Hirola sanctuary population	10%	17%	15%	1%	15%	18%	15%	15%	15%
Indicator 8.3 % growth rate of Ruko Rothschild Giraffe population	5%	0%	5%	17%	5%	14%	5%	5%	5%
Output 9: Forest and marine ecosystems management systems									
Indicator 9.1 # turtle nests recorded	20	1	20	20	40	15	40	40	40
Indicator 9.2 % forest canopy within NRT conservancies (determine baseline in 2021)	Baseline to be determined 2021							5%	5%
Indicator 9.3 # of Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) established to protect key marine species, mangrove and coral reefs	2	2	4	3	5	4	5	6	6

FOCUS ON NRT'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



Governance

NRT is presently engaged with several conservancies, supporting them in integrating a new Land Act law.

Between January and June, the government spent **KSh 128.2** million on conservancies (nearly **1.2** million USD), a commendable effort.

Output 1: Well-governed community conservancies.

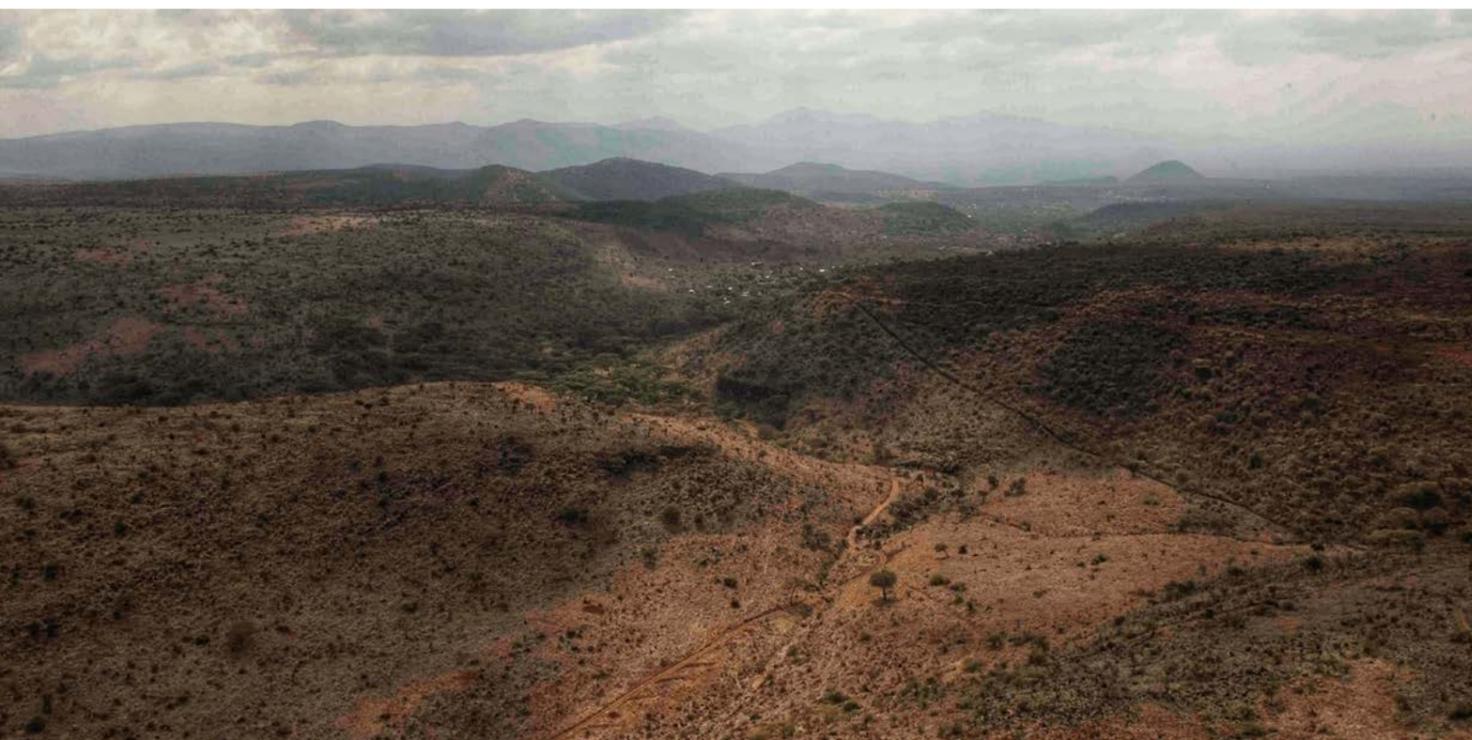
For nearly seven years, the Leadership and Management Program (LAMP) has been tailor-made for community conservancy leaders, with the goal of equipping them to effectively lead and manage their conservancies.

LAMP is one of NRT's most effective projects, contributing to independent governance and proactive conservancy management on behalf of the board of directors and conservancy management teams on the ground.

The program has been designed to take place over the period of four months in order to maximize its impact. It is divided into four modules, one running per month and each lasting 2-3 days.

NRT held **11** LAMP trainings from January to June 2021, with **106** men and **61** women attending from **11** different locations. In addition to these, **55** board members from the Westgate and Kalama conservancies received training.

"LAMP is one of the most impactful training programs for conservancies we've delivered since 2015 with support from The Nature Conservancy in Africa and USAID Kenya." Regional Director NRT Coast, Hassan Yussuf



Gender Inclusion

Gender inclusion is one of NRT's primary priority areas. The importance of women's voices in community conservancies is reflected in all of NRT's strategic goals. Longer-term solutions are more likely to be integrated when women are included in discussions on development, education, peace, water, and population.

According to the United Nations, "Rural women play a key role in supporting their households and communities in achieving food and nutrition security, generating income, and improving rural livelihoods and overall well-being. They contribute to agriculture and rural enterprises and fuel local and global economies."

Women, it goes without saying, play a critical role in accomplishing both the Millennium Development Goals and the NRT's strategic objectives.

NRT is focused on increasing the participation of women and youth in conservation and community development in order to achieve success in this area. So far, the benefits have been demonstrated in the form of more sustainable natural resource use and a decrease in gender disparity.

Gender equality has been a key focus at the Coast for the past six months. Over **1,000** women are working in conservation and community development projects across the conservancies. Projects involving women include the temporary octopus closure project, the mangrove restoration, reforestation and coastal women in microfinance programs and the ocean plastic collection and recycling project.

Spotlight on the 2021 Women's Leadership Summit

In March of this year, the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) and Conservation International (CI) co-hosted a two-day Women's Leadership Summit that brought together 40 indigenous women leaders from NRT's 40 community conservancies in Northern and Coastal Kenya. Women's voices and leadership in conservation got highlighted at the Summit.

The women leaders who attended the event spearhead various projects in their respective conservancies including bead work, peace-building efforts, rangelands rehabilitation, temporary octopus closures, mangrove restoration, ocean plastic collection and recycling, and micro-finance program to mention a few.

The summit was crucial in uniting the voices of women from all backgrounds who were encountering different environmental challenges but shared similar struggles in terms of women's roles in the home, community and business.

By getting together and talking about the many obstacles and triumphs they have experienced, it became clear that

long-term conservation and human well-being can only be achieved when both men and women are involved in and influence decision-making.

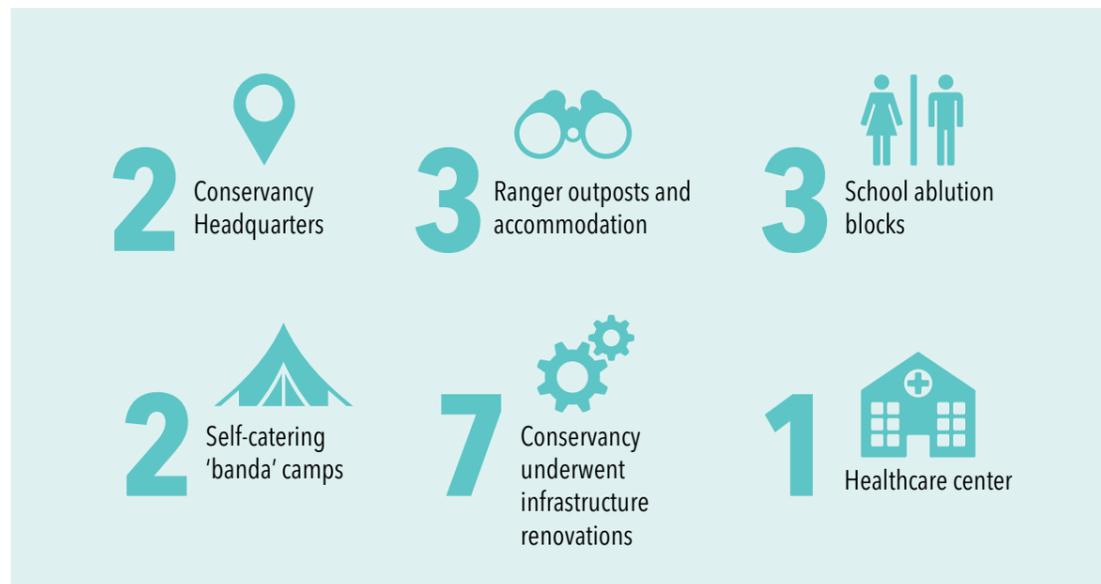
The necessity of increasing diversity in leadership, identifying and developing future female leaders, and fostering a sense of shared empowerment were all key messages from the weekend.

The participants left with the goal of empowering other women to get more involved in conservation and community development, as well as improving their own knowledge, skills, and mandate to support gender equality in community conservation.



Infrastructure

Conservancies occasionally require NRT assistance in developing infrastructure, for effective management and operations. This infrastructure includes offices, lodging, ablution blocks, and tourism camps, to name a few. NRT supported the building of the following in the first six months of this year:



Social-CoMMS

The Social-CoMMS tool was created by NRT and TNC to track the socioeconomic status of conservancy communities and assess the social impact of conservancy and NRT program operations.

Between January and June 2021, a Social CoMMS

survey was conducted in six conservancies: Kalama, Meibae, Kalepo, Ngilai, Naluwon, and West Gate.

2,638 households participated in the survey. These were the findings:

- **63%** of households had livestock as the predominant livelihood activity, and 16% had casual employment
- **70%** of the respondents believed security has improved
- **73%** of the population felt 'safe'
- **67%** of people had experienced wildlife conflict
- **63%** of people believed the benefits of wildlife outweighed the cost
- **89%** of people who believe wildlife is important to their future
- **6%** households whose member(s) permanently employed by the conservancy, **16%** casually employed by the conservancy
- **46%** of people reported an increase in income
- **48%** of people reported improved well-being

Output 2: Supportive Government Policies, Laws and Finance

Government Support

It is applaudable that government assistance for the conservancy concept has increased over the last six months.

Samburu County funded six different conservancy projects totaling **KSh 42,700,000** to support the construction of outposts, bandas, water and security infrastructure, and provide pay to alleviate grazing-related challenges during periods of low rainfall.

Peace and Security

There has been an increase in conflict in the terrain during the last six months, primarily owing to pastoral disputes caused by insufficient rainfall.

The challenges notwithstanding, the overwhelming feedback from the conservancy communities is that, even with the increase in security incidents, the situation is considerably safer and more tranquil with the conservancies' cooperation and, by extension, NRT's support.



Output 3: Effective Peace-Building Between Ethnic Communities

During the prevailing times, when tourism is down due to the pandemic and low rainfall is a threat, the peace team and the activities that they carry out are critical.

It is very encouraging that in the last six months, the community in Marsabit has made a concerted effort to undertake inter-tribal peace negotiations between the area's competing tribes.

The Rendile and Gabra tribes signed a proclamation in June, and a peace committee was formed to help them resolve their differences. Fact-finding teams in Samburu North established that engaging the leadership, youth, and women peace organizations was the best way to break the silence on the Samburu-Turkana conflict.

Peace ambassadors, elders, and local administrations recently prevented an inter-tribal raid. Our peace team will continue to actively work with our communities in the future to provide nonviolent dispute resolution options and to foster increased mutual understanding, attitudes, and perceptions.

Output 4: Effective Community Policing in Support of Government Security Agencies

NRT's efforts to safeguard wildlife, humans, and cattle have been largely successful. This is not to say that security concerns are non-existent.

There has been an upsurge in illegal fishing and the bushmeat trade, targeted at more common species including dik-dik, impala, and colobus monkeys at the coast. NRT has been able to pick up more bushmeat poaching cases because of enhanced effort and the presence of two mobile teams in the coast region.

Many pastoralist groups engage in conflict over pasture due to a lack of rain in some areas.

Although the year 2021 has the highest threat ratings in the country, no elephant or rhino poaching has occurred in the terrain.

Since January, there have been **102** security incidents. Stock theft accounts for the majority of these occurrences, with **6,338** cattle heads stolen (and **4,484** returned!). There were **29** cases of bushmeat poaching. Security personnel were successful in apprehending **40** persons and retrieving eight firearms.



In Samburu North fact-finding teams established that the best way to break the silence on the Samburu-Turkana conflict was by engaging the leadership, youth and women peace groups.



Spotlight on Security Matters

"My team's ethnic diversity is something I'm particularly proud of. It's an aspect of the program that genuinely embodies NRT's goal of being inclusive of all ethnicities living and working in Kenya's vast northern and coastal landscapes.

The fusion of teams is a sign of peace. When people get together and set their cultural differences aside, they become stronger and more suited to find peaceful solutions to complex issues that are frequently fueled by ethnic tensions. This strategy is used by all teams and has proven to be an effective tool for dealing with complicated security concerns and situations, such as retaliatory elephant killings, bushmeat poaching, and livestock invasions.

For the 9-teams to be fully effective, they must be able to function and carry out their responsibilities in a lawful and efficient manner. All members therefore have both KWS and Police Status, allowing them to respond to and resolve wildlife-related situations as well as threats to community and cattle security.

When it comes to security matters, community and government support, as with all NRT initiatives, is essential. The 9-teams collaborate with KWS and the police, forming a solid and mutually beneficial partnership that benefits the conservancies." - Samuel Lekimaroro, NRT's Head of Security



Livelihoods + Enterprise

The value of livelihood investment is inextricably linked to ecosystem health and natural resource protection. Better healthcare, water supply, education, and infrastructure are all key incentives for developing communities to safeguard natural resources.

KSh 96 million was invested in conservancies in the first half of the year to achieve these livelihood needs. Additionally, the conservancies received **KSh 12.2** million in commercial income from programs such as Livestock-to-Market, BeadWORKS and tourism.

Over the last few months, household incomes and employment in NRT conservancies and tourist lodges totaled **KSh 180.6** million. Carbon sales, which began in late June, are an intriguing new financing instrument for conservancies.

The value of household incomes and employment in NRT conservancies and tourist lodges equates to

KShillings
180.6 million

over the last months



26

CLF projects initiated in the first half of 2021 with KShillings **110,956,514**

The CLF projects which have received support are a mixture of **education, microfinance, tourism** and one **environmental restoration** projects.



Output 5: Equitable and Responsive Livelihood Investments in Conservancy Communities

The Community Livelihood Fund (CLF) is an outcome-based project model in which communities select, fund, and implement initiatives that meet their livelihood needs.

In the first half of 2021, **26** CLF initiatives were launched, with a total investment of **KSh 110,956,514** in community development priorities. Education, microfinance, tourism, and one environmental restoration project are among the CLF programs that have received funding.

The Conservancy Livelihood Funds operate on the basis of a set of application regulations. Microfinance programs are currently being implemented in **11** of the conservancies, with infrastructural projects underway in Soit Oudo, Learata, and Lodung'okwe Primary schools.

Water Resource Management

Water is a critical component of meeting people's fundamental needs. There is need to curb human-wildlife conflict, particularly when water is scarce. Water management will remain a top concern for NRT and the conservancies because current indications point to northern Kenya experiencing a severe drought.



NRT's recently established water program is in development, and it will resolve a variety of water issues across the NRT landscape. It builds on the new structured approach to water development which ensures that water investments are planned holistically, community priorities are addressed, technical, financial, social, and environmental considerations are taken into account, and conservancy-level governance and management capabilities are built.

The integrated approach, which includes water resource planning and management, with conservancies serving as the entry point for water development, has resulted in more focused investment in community priorities across the landscape, resulting in more secure livelihoods, reducing human-wildlife conflicts, and boosting environmental conservation.

Water is a key element of ensuring people's basic needs are met, along with identifying ways to reduce human wildlife conflict, especially during times when water is hard to come by.

Achievements of the Water Team (January - June 2021)

- Water resources mapping and strategy development; completed in 7 conservancies: Samburu County: *Westgate, Ltungai, Namunyak (Ngilai, Kalepo and Nalowuon)*. Isiolo County: *Nakuprat Gotu*
- Water use measurement and monitoring system using smart meters and specialized tank sensors got installed in Sera to provide water use data and promote efficient water use. The conservancy water technician has been trained for periodic monitoring in all water points.
- Routine water quality monitoring in the Sera and Biliqo Bulesa Community Conservancies to detect changes in water quality and to ensure that people, livestock, and livestock have safe access to water.
- Desalination equipment were installed in Sera and Biliqo Bulesa Community conservancies to provide clean portable water for conservancy rangers. These kits are serviced and maintained by the conservancy rangers/staff with support from NRT's water technician.
- An NRT Water workshop is under construction to help with in-house maintenance of water supply infrastructure and equipment, particularly pumps, from all the community conservancies.
- Construction of new or rehabilitation of existing water delivery infrastructure resulting in easier access to water by community members, livestock, wildlife and at conservancy headquarters and ranger outposts.

Education

Access to good quality education is a catalyst for the empowerment of men and women, the growth of economies, the development of healthy families, and environmental conservation.

Several conservancies have been able to finance essential education infrastructure as a result of donor support, resulting in rapid improvement in educational quality.

Ablution facilities have been constructed in the following three schools:

- Soit Oudo Primary School

- Lodung'okwe Primary School
- Lerata Primary School

Many schools remain in desperate need of water and sanitation.

In some schools up to **100** students are crammed into a single classroom, making it crucial to have teachers who have been properly trained and equipped to instruct large groups of students. To facilitate this effort, NRT undertook a capacity building exercise for teachers after completing the construction of two classrooms at Wamba Mixed Secondary School.



Access to Health Care

The larger community has benefited from increased health care facilities thanks to the NRT conservancies. A maternity ward has been added to the Biliqo healthcare facility. Since its completion the project has improved the quality of medical care provided to the inhabitants of Biliqo. The number of patients treated by the medical team has also doubled as more patients can now access health care providers.

Government services and amenities are still sparse in this isolated Northern region, and residents walk considerably long distances to receive health services. Maternal services are severely lacking. Many women do not receive the critical care they require during and after pregnancy, putting expectant mothers and their new-born babies in grave danger.

Since its completion, the project has improved the medical services provided to the people of Biliqo, doubling the number of patients that the medical team is able to treat.

The addition of modern technology to the maternity ward has substantially improved the situation, allowing many more expectant mothers to access vital pre and post-natal services.

NRT is also committed to Clean Energy as a means of promoting good health while simultaneously conserving natural resources. Four conservancies, therefore, had **30** biogas digesters across **5** conservancies installed in 2020 followed by another **160** units in the first half of 2021.



Output 6: Successful Enterprises and Financial Services for Households, Community Groups, Conservancies and NRT Trading

NRTT's work, coupled with peace and security, is critical to the success of community conservancies. NRTT-affiliated businesses have expanded and flourished in the last six months.

The security, peace, and governance teams aim to establish conducive circumstances for businesses to thrive, demonstrating the direct link between environmental conservation and economic growth.

Highlights of the NRTT Program:

BeadWORKS



- **KSh 11 million** in sales to date (compared to **KSh 8 million** in 2020).
- **KSh 5.7 million** paid out to women for production labour
- E-commerce website is up and running: www.beadworkskenya.com



KSh 11 million

in sales to date (compared to KSh 8 million last year).

Mariella Furrer

Fodder Banks



- Biliqo-Bulesa Conservancy: constructed a **10-acre** fodder demonstration farm, boosting the nutritional status of livestock. The two conservancies received training in business skills and fodder productivity, respectively.
- Ltungai Conservancy: collected **20,760** bales of hay by December 2020. Commercial fodder is being considered by the community as a means of improving resiliency and livestock nutrition.
- **125** persons were trained on fodder production (**54** men, **37** women, and **34** youth in Ltungai and Biliqo Bulesa conservancies)

125

persons were trained on fodder production (54 men + 37 women + 34 youth in Ltungai and Biliqo Bulesa conservancies)



Paul Wambogo

Spotlight on the Ltungai Fodder banks Project: The Journey to Success

"The "Fodder Banks" Project involves pastoralists in the Ltungai Conservancy introducing grass production, i.e. cultivating grass.

Initially, an awareness meeting held in the three distinct units of the broader Ltungai community conservancy was marked with skepticism, fear, and animosity. Grass was considered a God-given resource, and many members of the target community who were interviewed scoffed at the idea of growing grass.

The old men and women reminisced the good old days when pasture was plentiful and they would welcome visitors from far areas during drought. However, in recent years, this has become a pipe dream, resulting in grazing pressure and a lot of clan and tribal animosity during search for pasture.

Persistence discussion with the conservancy leadership regarding the Project's advantages resulted in well-attended meetings by the three units. The participants in attendance unanimously agreed to start producing fodder as a result of this meeting.

For the 35 best up takers, NRT offered seeds, instruction,

and funded exposure trips. The first crop produced an excellent grass crop thanks to the rain, which piqued the interest of the skeptics. The second season was a huge success, with over 21,000 bales produced worth over KSh 6.3 million.

As a reward for their efforts, the top three producers from each unit received storage facilities, grass cutting equipment, and spraying pumps.

Pastoralists have recognized the significance of cultivating grass following last year's bountiful crop, which preceded the current dry season, because hay producers are contentedly feeding their cattle at their manyattas (homesteads) and selling extra grazing to their neighbors at very favorable prices.

The success of this Project resulted in 64 other pastoralists submitting a request to NRT for fodder production instruction, which was successfully performed. The newcomers are eager to get started, and I believe that in the next 2 years Ltungai conservancy will be the fodder commercial hub in the NRT conservancies. Every step matters, and perseverance pays." - Patrick Ekodere, Livestock Director/Fodder Banks Lead Advisor.

Tourism

The NRT tourism team has sought to establish self-catering camp grounds (bandas) to attract local and foreign tourists seeking a unique experience.

In the first six months of 2021, these camps earned approximately **KSh 1 million (968,000 USD)**, providing a valuable funding source for conservancies while international tourism remains limited. Two new camps, Nkoteiya and Tassia, have been added to the conservancy portfolio.

Last month, a beautiful new website for the Big North tourism project was launched: www.thebignorth.travel

Household Enterprises Savings and Credit Cooperative

Many rural households do not have access to commercial finance and credit. The lack of financial literacy and business skills combined with the fact that family assets are livestock stymies the development of household enterprises.

Administered by NRT Trading, the Northern Rangelands Savings and Credit Cooperative provides an accessible microfinance option for community members. Beneficiaries are furnished with access to finance, as well as financial literacy and entrepreneurship training, to help them support their household businesses.

- **304** new members recruited into the SACCO
- **3,969** members in the Sacco
- A total of **KSh 12.5** million had been disbursed to finance **352** businesses
- **299** youth and women trained in entrepreneurship in Oldonyiro, Melako, Songa, Kirimon, and Hanshak Nyagoro conservancies

The impact of COVID-19 on the economy and customer purchasing power has hampered Sacco members' abilities to save and repay loans.

A Community Livelihood Fund microfinance is planned for implementation in 2021 in Kirimon, Meibai, Hanshak Nyongoro, Songa, Jaldesa, Shurr, Leparua, Kalama, Ishaqbini, Pate and Kiunga.



Vocational Training

Ujuzi Manyattani is a village-based accredited vocational training program NRT Trading instituted in collaboration with Polytechnics to ensure that no one is left behind. Training is provided in the home villages, with a focus on optimizing local market opportunities.

The Program's curriculum has been adapted to accommodate trainees' performance of household responsibilities (such as livestock herding) and accommodates trainees who have not completed formal education. The last months saw **83** trainees across **6** conservancies complete the Ujuzi Manyattani program.



Natural Resources and Conservation

A total of **3.5** million hectares of conservancy rangelands have been rehabilitated and grazed according to grazing plans. The percent of forest canopy within NRT conservancies is a new metric that

NRT is developing a baseline for. To safeguard critical marine species, mangroves, and coral reefs, four locally managed marine zones have been established.

There has been no poaching of the 19 rhinos at Sera rhino sanctuary in the last six months, resulting in a 13% increase in rhino numbers in the sanctuary.



Output 7: Sustainable Rangelands Management Systems

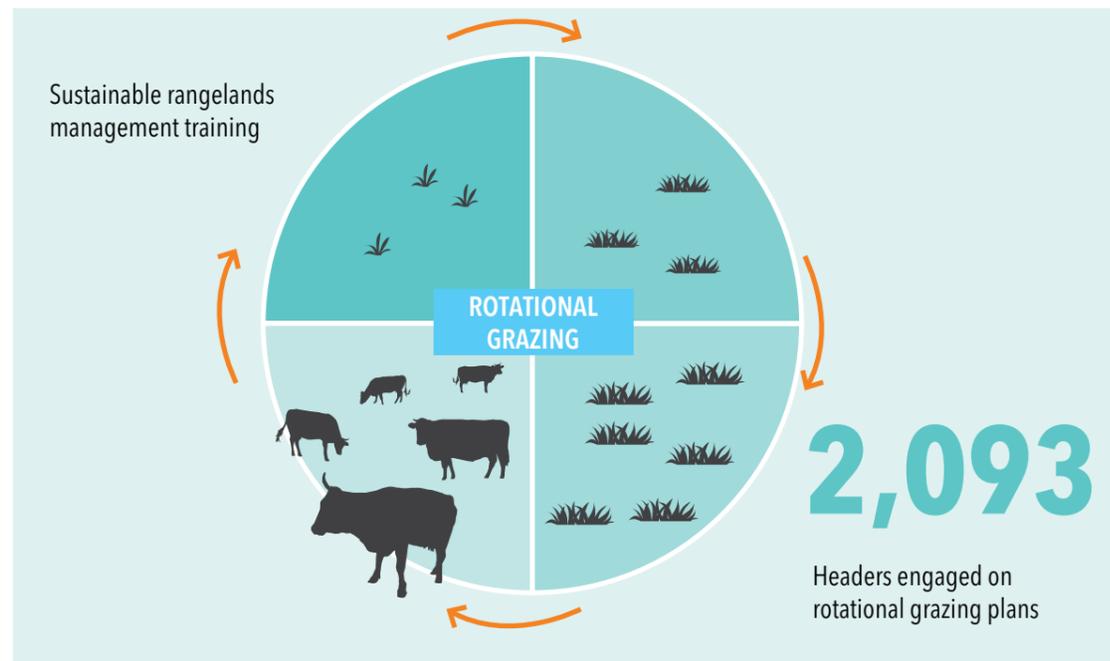
The effective management of rangelands is key to unlocking the potential of many of the conservancies.

Many community members rely on livestock for their livelihood, but livestock presence accompanied by inadequate grazing management leads to natural resource degradation and biodiversity loss.

Natural resource management is linked to peace and security. The NRT rangelands team recently

met with **2,093** herders (**1,752** men and **341** women) to discuss rotational grazing plans and how conservancies might benefit from their participation in the implementation of grazing plans.

1,111 conservancy area leaders, including **495** grazing committee members for **33** conservancies attended the quarterly and regional grazing meetings for wet and dry season grazing planning.



Threats such as alien invasive species are widespread. Consequently, NRT has launched a program to breed cochineal (a moth) in **18** greenhouses with the goal of releasing them into densely populated *Opuntia stricta* areas in an effort to minimize alien invasions, particularly of the *Opuntia stricta* (i.e. prickly pear).

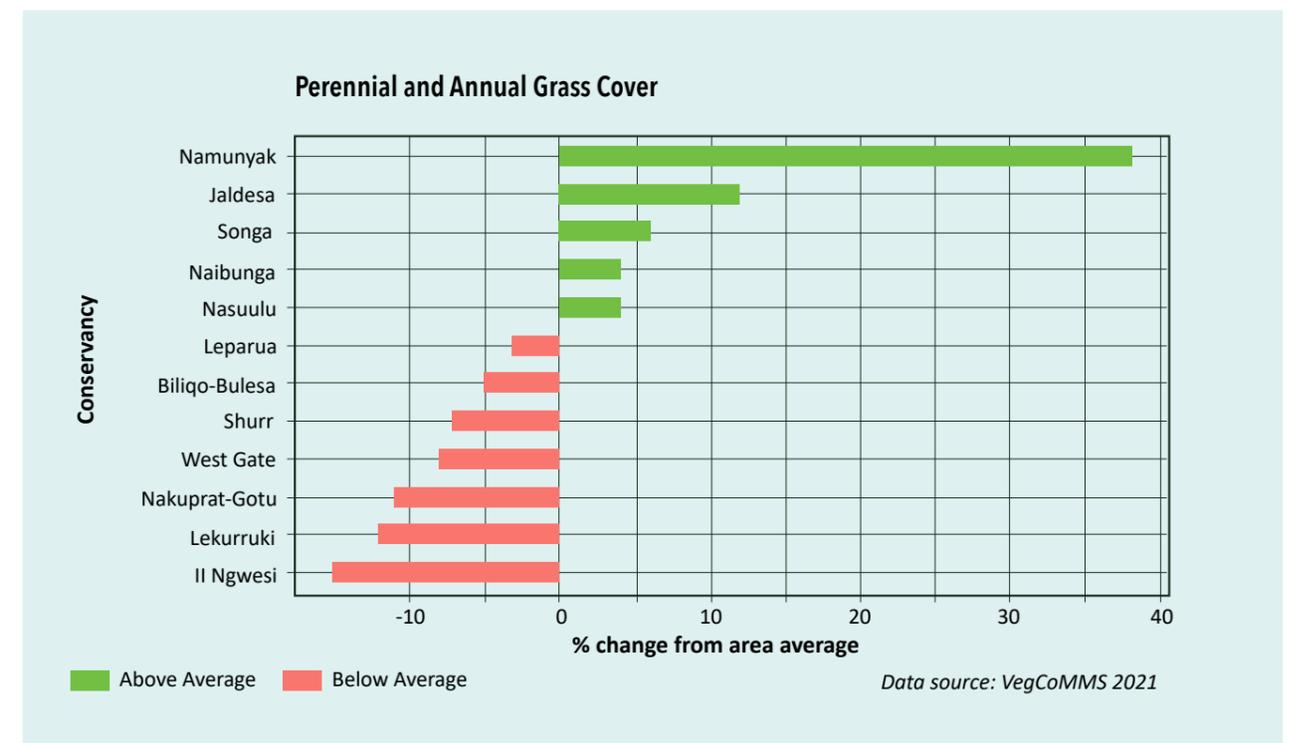


Invasive species frequently infiltrate regions overgrazed by cattle. In West Gate Conservancy, NRT recruited **236** women to remove *Acacia reficiens* woody invasive species, and replace them with perennial grasses.

In an effort to reduce the alien invasives, primarily the Opuntia stricta (i.e. prickly pear), NRT has embarked on a program to breed cochineal (a moth) in 18 greenhouses with the aim of releasing them into densely populated Opuntia stricta areas.

The Veg CoMMS (Community Monitoring and Management System), which began in 2012, is currently being implemented by **15** conservancies. Veg CoMMS enables conservancies to monitor the present state of their rangelands in order to tailor grazing management to local conditions and weather patterns.

Grazing management is extremely important; even where grass cover is below average, places with effective grazing practices have more pasture than those with poor management. Despite severe pasture shortage throughout the region, animals in the conservancies survived.



The Rangeland Cartoon Program

The Rangeland Cartoon program is still going strong, and epitomizes ways in which natural resource management and education can go hand in hand.

This Program screens educative and entertaining rangeland cartoons, with a focus on the Meibae and Ngilai conservancies.

Between January and June, the cartoon team reached **1,492** herders, **394** schoolchildren, and **128** youths with diverse environmental messages that included grazing planning, grazing management, and land restoration approaches.



Duncan Ndlovu

The Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project

One of the most innovative projects and biggest successes of the first half of the year was the launch of the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project.

Spotlight on the Northern Kenya Rangeland Carbon Project

For nearly a decade, NRT and TNC, in collaboration with several other significant partners (Native and Soils for the Future), have been developing the Northern Kenya Rangeland Carbon Project, a long-term soil carbon project that will benefit the rangelands and the communities involved.

The Northern Kenya Rangeland Carbon Project is expanding the frontiers of carbon removal.

The Project is the first large-scale grasslands soil carbon project in the world and the world's largest carbon removal project to date.

The Northern Kenya Rangeland Carbon Project is the first in the world to:

- Use the new VM0032 methodology, making it a 'beta test' of that methodology

- Use modeled removals rather than measured removals
- Focus entirely on soil removals
- Work with pastoralist communities who use land and resources communally

The Project spans 1.9 million hectares (4.7 million acres) and is an initiative that will generate a new sustainable revenue stream for the 14 community conservancies, increase the financial viability of conservation and make the community conservancies more resilient.

This year, a total of 3.2 million verified and validated carbon credits became available for purchase. The carbon for these credits was sequestered between 2013 and 2016, through land protection and rotational grazing practices.



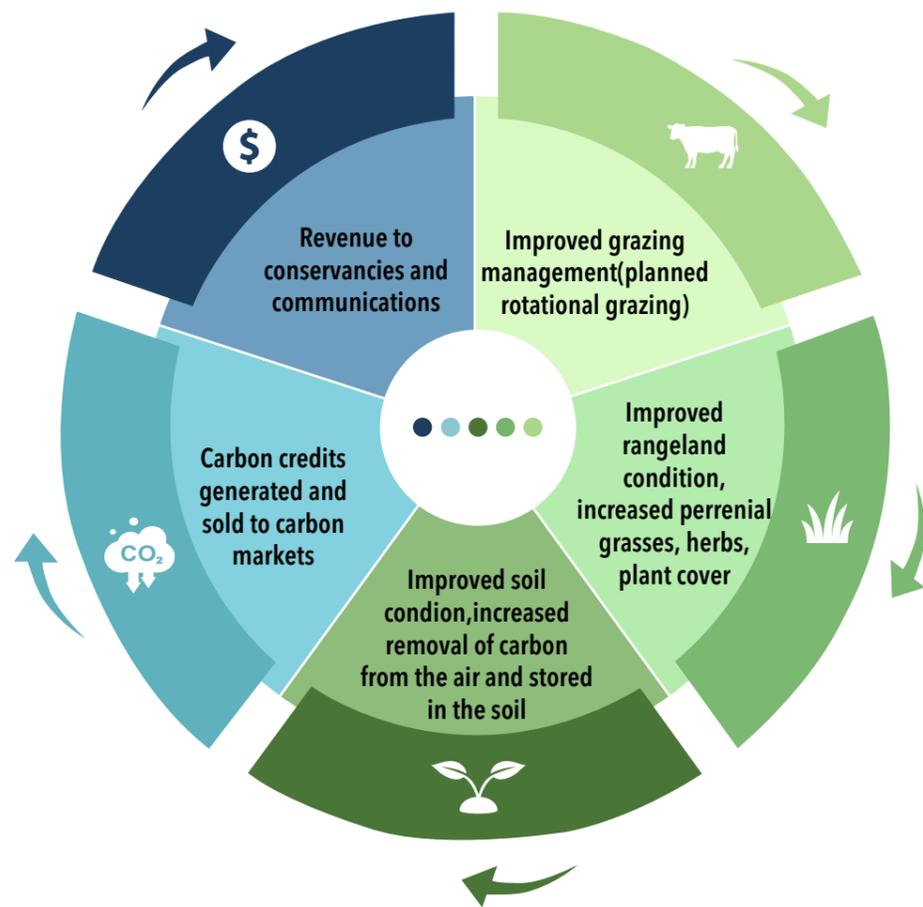
Paul Wambugi

Land degradation in Kenya takes numerous forms, including unsustainable loss of vegetation and landscape features, rising aridity and water scarcity, and the spread of invasive species. These elements are inextricably linked, acting as mutual degradation accelerators.

Combating land degradation in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) cannot be understated in terms of relevance and urgency. It is the bedrock for attaining all of the region's Sustainable Development Goals, as soil and land are the primary sources of livelihoods and economic activity.

Degradation of grasslands not only poses a significant risk to the hundreds of millions of people who rely on them, but it also poses a severe environmental threat due to the massive amounts of soil organic carbon released into the atmosphere.

Kenya has been a signatory to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) since 1997 and has laid out its targets for Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) to achieve no net loss of healthy and productive land by 2030.



Output 8: Flagship Species and Habitat Conservation Programmes

From elephants to black and white rhinos to Rothschild giraffe, Grevy's zebra, hirola, and octopus, we are witnessing a rise in critical species across the conservancies.

The bulk of Kenya's wildlife lives outside of protected areas. Resultantly, NRT's work must continue to focus on preserving biodiversity in these regions, in addition to improving livelihoods and ensuring the peace and security of the communities who live in the conservancies.

Northern Kenya's elephant population (in Laikipia, Samburu, Marsabit, and now Meru) is arguably the country's second most important after Tsavo. Due to the substantial overlap between their territory and migratory routes and those of people, it is one of the most distinctive elephant populations on the continent.

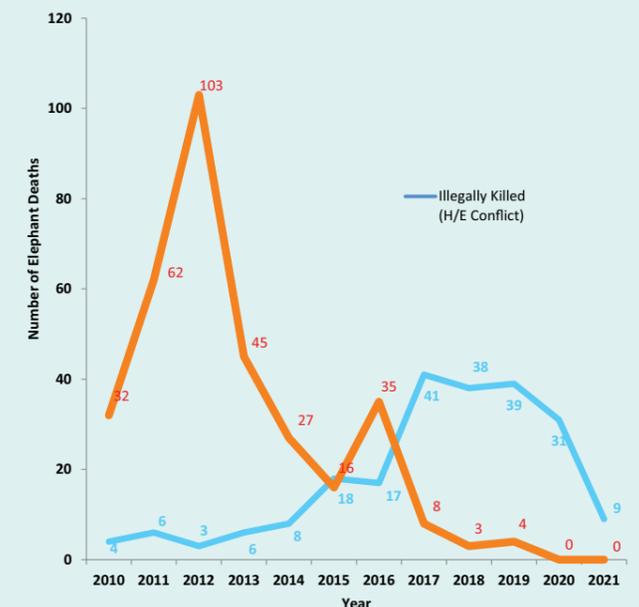
Human-elephant conflict is a huge present and future concern. This example of people and elephants living side by side has many challenges. Many conservancies have held meetings to discuss this issue, such as the workshop held with stakeholders involved in the Naibunga human-elephant conflict.

Across the NRT terrain, the reduction in trophy poaching and ivory poaching has been a huge success. Ivory poaching is the deliberate killing of elephants for the purpose of extracting and selling their tusks, whereas human-elephant conflict is primarily retaliatory in nature, occurring when an elephant competes for or destroys a critical resource that people in communities rely on, such as water or crops. This decline in recent months is encouraging, especially given forecasts that human-elephant conflict-related killings would rise as both elephant and human populations grow over the landscape.

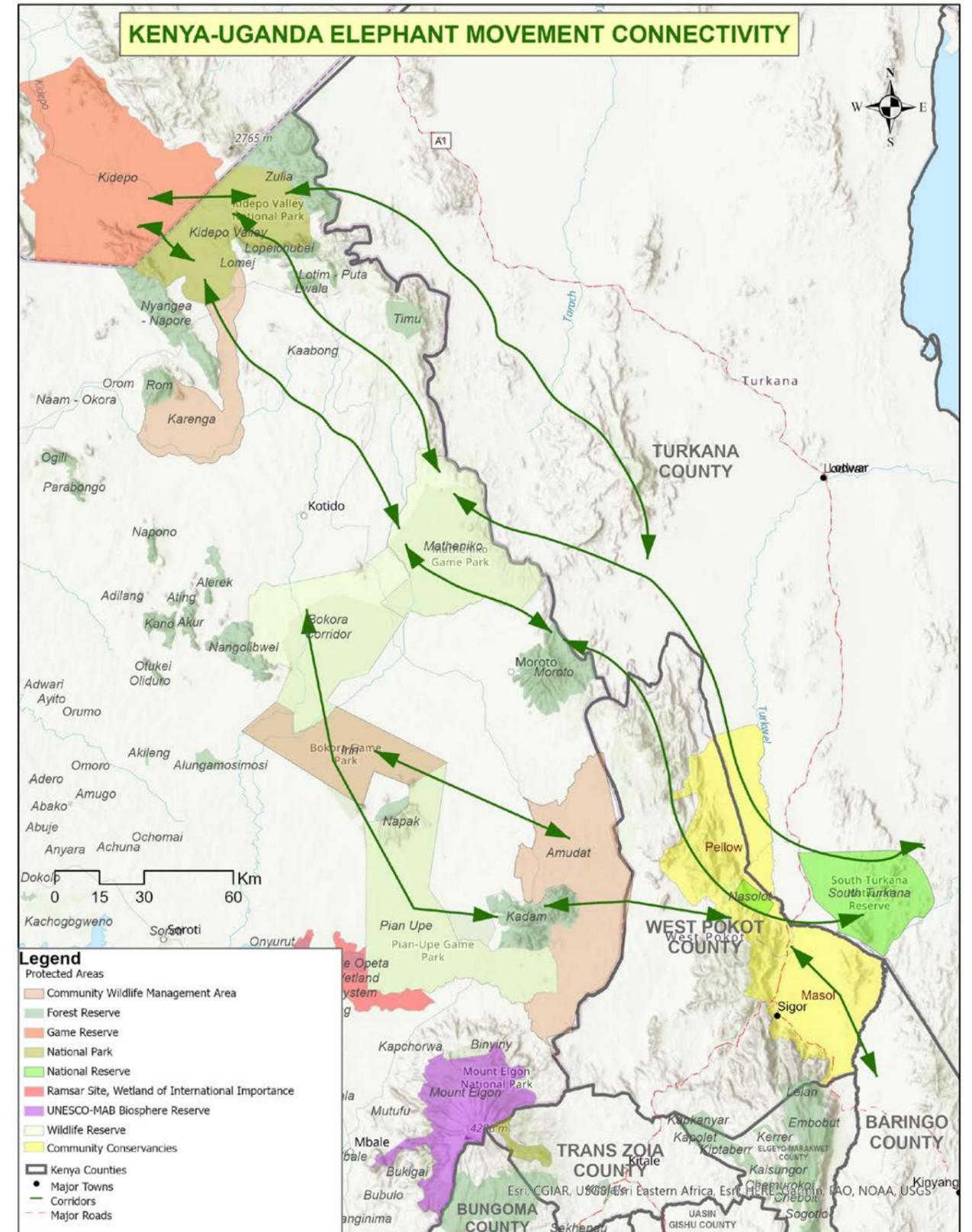
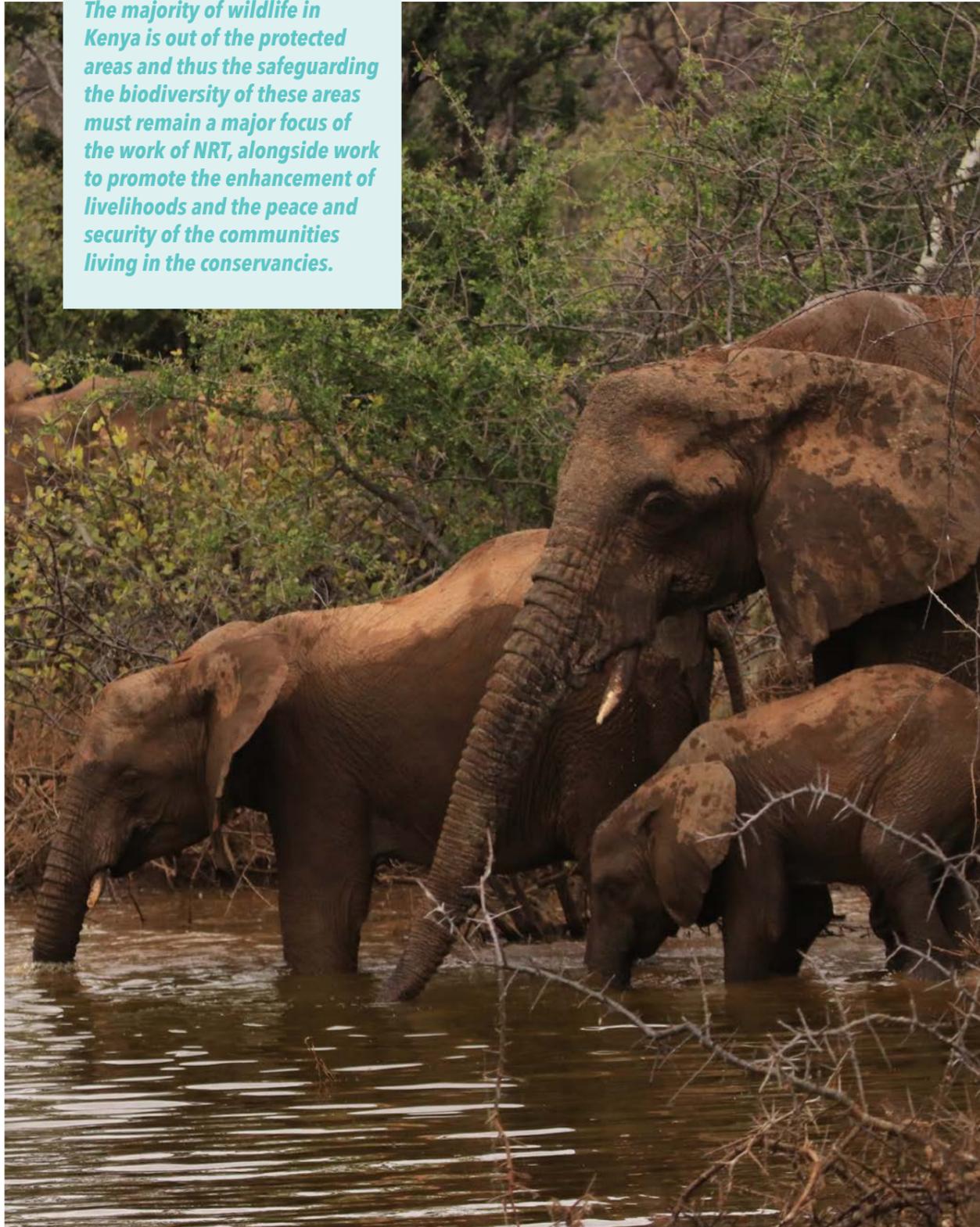
We believe that a variety of variables contribute to our ability to keep these numbers low (and trophy poaching levels at nil), including:

- Collective ownership of wildlife, resulting in communities serving as wildlife custodians
- Investment in intelligence-led wildlife protection efforts
- Collaboration of the mobile teams, conservancy scouts and government law enforcement agencies
- Investment in Digital Radios and EarthRangers
- High-level training sessions

Elephant Trophy Poaching and Human Elephant Conflict Trends in NRT Member Conservancies Between 2010 to March 2021



The majority of wildlife in Kenya is out of the protected areas and thus the safeguarding the biodiversity of these areas must remain a major focus of the work of NRT, alongside work to promote the enhancement of livelihoods and the peace and security of the communities living in the conservancies.



Despite the fact that there was no trophy poaching in the first half of the year, the percentage of illegally killed elephants (PIKE) is currently at 31%.



Reteti Elephant Sanctuary

Currently there are **25** elephants at Reteti which are managed as two separate groups (**13** calves in the nursery herd and **12** calves in the older herd).

9 elephant calves got rescued between January and June 2021 (**2** were reunited to family, **4** are at Reteti and regrettably, we lost **3**). Other species rescued include Reticulated giraffes and Plain's zebra.

The Sanctuary has ongoing governance issues and NRT along with its partners are committed to addressing and improving these challenges. Key recommendations have been provided to the Government Taskforce and an interim management committee with membership from Namunyak, Ngilia Unit, NRT and SF has been put in place to support continuity of Reteti operations while strengthening the management structures of the sanctuary and ensuring the welfare of the elephant orphans remains at the forefront.



Reteti Community Goat's Milk Project

Goat milk continues to be fed to the smaller calves (0-12 months old). The milk is sourced from the neighborhood surrounding the Reteti elephant sanctuary. In addition to enhancing the health of elephant calves, goat milk has improved community livelihoods and generated revenue for the people.

Six rhino technical committee meetings were held in the first six months of 2021 at IIngwesi-Lekurruki to strategize and implement the items needed for rhino reintroduction in the two conservancies.

The eastern black rhino population, like the elephant population, has experienced no poaching so far in

2021, and NRT expects the rhino in Sera conservancy to remain safe for many years to come.

There are currently **19** rhinos in Sera, with a healthy calf delivered in May and more calves expected before the end of the year.



The furtive Hirola antelope is as endangered as the eastern black rhino. The protection and release of this species from the sanctuary is a crucial step in conserving this highly endangered species, which is made more difficult by the high insecurity in the coastal region.

The entire Ishaqbini hirola sanctuary fence and extension is currently being improved and renovated. **1,400** meters of fence line got restored and extended by **900** meters, and the conservancy HQ and airfield are now encompassed in the bigger sanctuary fence.

57 hirola antelopes and **22** other species, including giraffes, zebras, smaller kudus, and buffalo, were released into the wild earlier this year due to the sanctuary's capacity being reached. Out of a total

of **57** hirolas, **5** have been collared and tracked. Unfortunately, two collared hirolas were preyed upon, but the three remaining are still being tracked and are thriving.

The endangered and indigenous Rothschild Giraffe received a lot of attention last year. In April of this year, the remaining nine giraffes were relocated from Lake Baringo's vanishing Longicharo Island to a sanctuary on the mainland Ruko Community Conservancy.

The giraffes were originally relocated to the lake to increase their population, but the recent rise in water levels has limited their food supplies, necessitating relocation to ensure their survival.

"Conservation is clearly beneficial to the people in my neighborhood. The return of the black rhino began as a dream. People have asked how the community handles rhinos, and now we have the answer – with 19 rhinos. I'm pleased to see the community making use of the area." - Reuben Lendiria, Sera Community Conservancy Manager



19

Black Rhinos in the community conservancy



57

Hirola were released from the sanctuary into the wild



9

Giraffe were translocated off of the disappearing Longicharo Island in Lake Baringo



Output 9: Forest and Marine Ecosystem Management Systems

The Marine Program is nearly six years old and thriving, thanks to TNC's generous sponsorship.

The NRT-Coast conservancies underwent an annual audit in February. Overall, local communities' capability in conservancies has been increased to preserve priority mangrove habitat from unrestricted

harvesting, repair degraded mangrove regions, and build relations with Community Forest Associations.

Mangrove restoration projects are underway and are focused on training and refresher training, planting and monitoring of planted sites.

Milestones achieved include:

- **31** local community mangrove specialists from Pate Island, including **18** women and **13** men, participated in the training. Ten (**10**) experts can now monitor the planted areas independently.
- a total of **18,184** mangrove seedlings were planted between January and June 2021, with nurseries holding a total of **8410** propagules. **68,132** mangroves have been planted Since 2018, in Pate, Kiunga, and Lower Tana, with nurseries holding **19,735** mangrove seedlings.
- The team performed interview surveys successfully to obtain perspectives and recommendations for creating a beach seine gear exchange scheme.
- Artificial coral reef restorations are being carried out within LMMAs in the Pate Marine Community Conservancy (PMCC) with the goal of restoring corals, improving fisheries, and improving management of marine areas. Restoration target sites have been identified and mapped, as well as three specific restoration points within the LMMAs. For lobsters, 16 artificial cylindrical blocks, 12 nursery tables and 3 nurseries have been built.
- **45** community members were trained on reef restoration and actively participated in the restoration work.
- In March 2021, with the support of KWS and the Fisheries Department, Kiunga successfully implemented their first two temporary octopus closures (**147** ha) Magulugulu in Ishakani (**68** ha) and Mwamba Mkuu in Kiunga (**79** ha). This program has resulted in greater female engagement in conservation efforts, improved octopus catch and size, and a better market price, as well as an increase in octopus population.
- The Bahari Moja ocean plastic collection and recycling initiative in Kiunga is making good progress. NRT, TNC, Safari Doctors, and Kwayu Safaris are collaboratively involved in the project's implementation.
- During the reporting period, the conservancy ran the awareness and beach clean-up initiative, #Keepourocean clean, in Mkokoni, and collected up to **6.5** tons of plastic debris.
- The Bahari Moja plastic recycling center now has a plastic sorting area, workshop area, and a house for the plastic shredder. To demonstrate the usage of eco bricks for construction, these facilities were built with recycled plastic 'eco-bricks' manufactured by community women. Over **8,000** eco-bricks were used, consuming over **5,600kg** of plastic trash that would have otherwise damaged the environment.

45

community members were trained on reef restoration and actively participated in the restoration work.



Forest

- 4 forest patches were surveyed out of the 12 forest patches in Ndera. The patches surveyed included Kinyadu, Buboya, Matannama and Kanu forest.
- 80 different troops of extremely endangered Tana primates were spotted during the latest survey, including Red Colobus monkeys (39), Mangabey monkeys (7), and Sykes monkeys (34).



LOOKING AHEAD

NRT is dedicated to completing the restructure of the organization in order to create capacity across the new regional structure over the next six months, as well as initiating work in the new and expansive Cherab conservancy.

Several continuing assessments focused on the organization's collective and connected impact will also aid in planning the next few years and positioning the organization to continue to innovate.

Women's empowerment, peace efforts, and elephant corridors and connectivity will all remain priorities, as will the need to safeguard the conservancies'

governance systems, particularly as presidential elections approach.

To ensure that our planet can continue to sustain the needs of all people, communities all around the world must learn to live in peace with nature. One of the most important aspects of our work is to develop solutions for people and nature to coexist in harmony as Africa's human population increases.

It is our hope that more communities around the world, not just in Kenya, would be able to prioritize their natural resources and become active custodians and beneficiaries of natural capital.

ASANTENI SANA!

Without the support of our partners and funders, NRT would be unable to carry out its mission. The conservancy movement, and, more crucially, the communities and habitats it serves, can only progress with the continued support of our partners.

Thank you for everything you do to support this effort, which is devoted to ensuring the long-term viability of community conservancies and ensuring the financial feasibility of natural resource conservation.

One of the most critical things to get right as we look to expanding protected areas around the world is connectivity. For animals to be able to move between landscapes is essential - just as it is for us.



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