



NRT NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2024





NRT Newsletter

March 2024 Issue

Dear NRT Partners,

An ancient proverb reminds us, "Once you carry your own water you will remember every drop." No one understands the depth of this saying more than the indigenous communities dwelling in the arid and semi-arid parts of Kenya, where women and herders trek more than 15 kilometres every day to find water for domestic use and livestock.

The enormous distance to water sources coupled with other socioeconomic factors, such as insecurity caused by conflict over dwindling water resources, and the cost of water and its transportation, drive many households to consume unsafe, contaminated or saline water, endangering their health and impacting their livelihoods.

World Water Day on the 22nd of March presented an opportunity to reflect on the progress made in increasing access to clean water. While hundreds of thousands of people, livestock and wildlife have benefitted from our Water Programme, much more remains to be done.

Follow along as we take a deep dive into the measures we are implementing, with our partners' support, to address water scarcity across the NRT landscape.

Waves of Peace: The Tura-Narasha Water Project Unites Warring Communities in Northern Kenya

The majority of our member community conservancies are located in Arid and Semi-arid Lands (ASALs), where access to sustainable water supply and basic sanitation is lower than the national average for rural areas.

Naibunga Community Conservancy, in Laikipia County, is no different.

For years, the Conservancy's Tura community suffered from water scarcity. Life for this community only took a turn for the better in 2013, when the Laikipia County Government drilled a borehole in this dry, remote area, improving access to water.

Recently, the borehole was equipped with solar technology—lowering the cost of water extraction—and its piping was extended to

supply water to the Tiamamut Community in addition to the Tura Community. The solarization of the borehole was supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency through the Integrated Management of Natural Resources for Resilience in ASALs (IMARA) Programme.

IMARA, a seven-year programme (2018-2025), is increasing the climate resilience of vulnerable households in Isiolo, Elgeyo Marakwet, Marsabit, Narok, Samburu, Turkana, West Pokot and Laikipia Counties.

The Programme is being implemented by a consortium of five partners: World Vision Kenya (Lead), NRT, Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association, Saferworld and the Stockholm Environment Institute.



While the water problem for the Tura and Tiamamut Communities in Naibunga Conservancy in Laikipia County had been resolved, in neighbouring Isiolo County, water scarcity persisted, in the Narasha and Parkuruk communities, who desperate for water, began crossing into Laikipia to draw water from the borehole, sparking conflict.

The Tura community especially, was aggrieved by the influx of people, as their livestock encroached on the community's dry season grazing area. Incidents of pipeline vandalism and livestock theft further escalated tensions, as they resulted in grave injuries and loss of life.

Mary Mosian, from the Tiamamut community in Naibunga Conservancy explains, "In the past, the Narasha community would receive relief food and generously share with us to feed our children. The conflict over water ruined relationships and the self-help groups we had formed to support each other collapsed."

To identify the root causes of conflict in the area and foster peaceful coexistence, a task force led by NRT's Peace Programme and consisting of elders from the affected communities, national and local government representatives, National Police Service officials and other key stakeholders was formed.

The task force drew the support of local security authorities and the area Member of Parliament, Hon. Sarah Lekorere. With the assistance of local chiefs and village elders from the warring communities, the task force held peace talks with morans from the Tiamamut and Narasha communities, who were active participants in the conflict.

The talks bore fruit and resulted in NRT extending the pipeline to supply water to the Narasha community, while USAID's Nawiri Programme is supporting pipeline extension to the Parkuruk community. The project is set for completion in three months.

The task force and the extension projects have improved peace in the area, and on the 22nd of March, the Tura, Tiamamut, Parkuruk and Narasha communities came together to celebrate World Water Day, whose theme this year, 'Leveraging Water for Peace,' underscored the vital role of water in fostering harmony.

For the Tura and Tiamamut communities in Naibunga Community Conservancy, and Narasha and Parkuruk in neighbouring Isiolo County, the days of the glass being half-empty are over. Now, thanks to these strategic water interventions, their glass can be filled again.



Ujuzi Manyattani: The MashinaniWORKS Programme Creating a Brighter Future for Morans

Evans Echwa, a 26-year-old moran from Nakuprat-Gotu Community Conservancy in Isiolo County, prided himself in herding his family's cattle.

Banditry attacks, however, and prolonged drought made preserving the herd an uphill task. He found himself moving with the cattle further and further from home in search of pasture, sometimes covering distances of up to 100 kilometres.

Echwa's biggest fear materialised when a severe drought wiped out the entire herd, leaving his pastoralist family with no alternative source of income. With the herd gone, the future was bleak.

In a desperate attempt to restore the lost livestock, Echwa joined a group of morans in a daring cattle raid on a neighbouring community. During the raid, he sustained gunshot wounds and barely made it out alive, while some of his peers paid the ultimate price.

While reflecting on the cataclysmic failure of the raid, Echwa resolved to build a better future for himself, one devoid of violence.

In 2021, he learned that MashinaniWORKS' Ujuzi Manyattani Programme was conducting a sensitisation meeting in his Conservancy, and offering practical vocational training that could help him turn things around for himself and his family. Despite his initial apprehension, he applied for training by the Pro-

gramme and was pleasantly surprised when he was selected.

The next three months became a transformative journey for Echwa as he immersed himself in Ujuzi Manyattani's intensive motorcycle repair course, and steadily acquired the skill. After successfully completing the course, the Programme issued him a brand-new toolkit when he graduated in April 2022, enabling him to launch his own motorcycle repair business.

Echwa established his garage in Kiwanja Village in Nakuprat-Gotu Conservancy. He views his business as an instrument for driving positive change. "Having my own garage has improved my ability to focus. I no longer go on livestock raids to survive. My priority is expanding my business and helping my family and community more," he shares.



962

graduates have undergone vocational training through Ujuzi Manyattani since the Programme's inception in 2019



Echwa is one of 962 graduates who have undergone vocational training through Ujuzi Manyattani since the Programme's inception in 2019. By offering vocational training in marketable skills, the Programme promotes entrepreneurship and livelihood diversification, increasing indigenous communities' resilience against climate change.

Ujuzi Manyattani is supported by USAID through both the Local Works and the Scaling Sustainability and Resilience for Community Conservancies Programmes, the Royal Danish Embassy through the Danish International Development Agency, the French Development Agency, ICEP, The Nature Conservancy and the Embassy of Sweden through the IMARA Programme.

Addressing Food Insecurity: EU-funded Ustahimilivu Project Transforms Lives in Masol Community Conservancy, West Pokot County

Five years ago, if you were to visit Orwa, a village nestled in Masol Community Conservancy in West Pokot County, you would find yourself in a rugged landscape with sweltering heat, dense thorny bushes and swirling dust.

Historically, Orwa was a drought-prone area, whose arid nature compelled its inhabitants to purchase food from distant towns. The most affected were children, who suffered malnutrition and starvation. Villagers from Orwa often moved with their livestock to Kainuk, a nearby town, igniting natural resource-based conflict with their neighbours, the Turkana community.

Today, Orwa is a buzzing hub of agricultural activity, focussed primarily on crop cultivation. This remarkable turnaround is attributed to the Ustahimilivu Project. Launched in 2020 and funded by the European Union (EU), this four-year project operates in West Pokot County and aims at increasing community resilience to drought and other effects of climate change in Kenya's ASALs. The Project is implemented by a consortium consisting of NRT (lead), the European Committee for Training and Agriculture (CEFA), E4Impact Foundation, Social Ministry Research Network (SOMIRENEC) and Amref Health Africa.

Guided by CEFA, the Ustahimilivu Project commissioned the implementation of the Para Sany Irrigation Scheme in Orwa in 2021, ensuring a sustainable water supply for the community's diverse needs. Covering a net area of 80 acres, the Scheme has facilitated sorghum farming in Orwa, ensuring 200 sorghum farmers in the area have access to water.

In 2023, the sorghum farmers established contact with CropSoko, an agri-tech platform that connects smallholder farmers to formal markets. CropSoko is designed to enable smallholder farmers practice market-led production, provide reliable revenue streams to vulnerable communities and trace food movement from farms to markets.



**Ksh
1.2
million**

generated in
revenue for
farmers after
selling sorghum
harvest at Ksh 48
per kilogram to
CropSoko.



CropSoko supported 170 farmers by providing them with sorghum seeds and free ploughing services, enabling them to cultivate 87 acres of land. This year, in mid-January, the farmers harvested an impressive 25 tonnes of sorghum, recording their largest crop harvest to date. For the Orwa community, whose main source of livelihood has been pastoralism, this was a momentous occasion.

The bountiful sorghum harvest fetched a lucrative price of Ksh 48 per kilogram when sold to CropSoko, generating a total of Ksh 1.2 million in revenue for the farmers. This motivated them to invest even more in the upcoming planting season.

Joachim Alemsia, Chairperson of the EU-funded Para Sany Irrigation Scheme, expressed his profound gratitude for the Scheme. "This is like a dream to us! The farmers are happy. We never imagined our farms could yield such profits. Moreover, besides the financial gains, we have effectively addressed hunger and malnutrition in our region. We are now food secure."

A constant problem the farmers have faced has been the destruction of their crops by live-stock as their farms are not fenced. To address this issue, CEFA has allocated funds for fence installation and the construction of essential infrastructure, including a farm storage facility, further enhancing the sustainability of the farming activities.

NRT Hosts **The Nature Conservancy's** Global Board

It was an honour to host The Nature Conservancy's Global Board, led by the Chairperson, Hon. William Frist, accompanied by the Chief Executive Officer, Jen Morris, the Regional Managing Director for Africa, Ademola Ajagbe, and other members, at West Gate Community Conservancy.

During the visit, the Board interacted with community members and discussed rangeland management and the enhancement of conservancy-based tourism.

The team also toured a grass plot in Sasaab, where they received a briefing on the community's innovative rangeland restoration initiatives, including the implementation of semi-circular earth bunds to promote grass growth.

Lastly, the Board Chairperson presided over the launch of West Gate's accommodation block, whose construction was supported by the Kenya Electricity Transmission Company and completed in 2023, with the goal of generating income for the Conservancy. The accommodation block was furnished using Carbon Community Funds.



NRT Convenes 4th Women’s Leadership Summit and Commemorates International Women’s Day

60 women leaders from 44 NRT member community conservancies across 10 counties gathered in Isiolo Town from the 6th to the 7th of March, to attend our fourth annual Women’s Leadership Summit, which aims at building women’s capacity in community conservation, governance and natural resource management.

Discussions during the two-day summit centred on climate change, human rights, the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project, education and health. The women pledged to strength regional caucuses, advocate for the inclusion of youth and persons with disabilities in conservation, improve communication of women-led activities, and mentor young girls to advance conservation goals and outcomes.

The Summit culminated in the commemoration of International Women’s Day on the 8th of March, at a colourful ceremony held in collaboration with the Isiolo County Government. Representatives from the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association and The Nature Conservancy also attended the Summit and the Women’s Day event, whose theme was ‘Invest in Women, Accelerate Progress.’



Joy as MashinaniWORKS’ Ufugaji Bora Mashinani Programme Graduates 293 Herders

The 20th of March was a day of joyful celebration for 293 pastoralist herders as they graduated from MashinaniWORKS’ Ufugaji Bora Mashinani Programme after undergoing hands-on training in livestock production, with support from USAID’s Local Works Programme.

The herders, drawn from 10 NRT member community conservancies across Isiolo, Marsabit, Samburu and Laikipia Counties, demonstrated exceptional dedication throughout their training, which covered various aspects of livestock management, including breeding, feeding, health, marketing, climate change adaptation, as well as leadership and governance.

Bishar Elmi, the Director of Livestock Production at the State Department for Livestock Development, presided over the event, which was also attended by national and county government officials.



NRT's Board of Directors and Council of Elders Convene

NRT's Board visited Nakuprat-Gotu, Nasuulu, Kalama, Westgate and Sera Community Conservancies, where they interacted with community members and assessed the effectiveness of various livelihood projects, particularly those centred on water, education and health development and conservancy-based tourism.

Additionally, in line with our commitment to fostering good governance, and community development and growth, we hosted the first bi-annual



Council of Elders meeting of the year, converging the chairpersons of all 45 NRT member community conservancies in Kenya and Uganda.

Meeting discussion points included updates on NRT, the community conservancies, MashinaniWORKS, and the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project, as well as highlights on accomplishments, challenges, and strategies for implementing this year's plans.

Our partners, county government officials, members of county assemblies and national government administrative officers from the ten counties in which we operate also attended the meeting.



Newsbytes from Across the NRT Landscape

REGIONAL UPDATES

NRT Centre

The NRT Centre team met to discuss the water infrastructure development needs of the Region's eight member community conservancies, and identify the priorities that can be supported by the USAID-funded Sustainable Transformational and Accessible Water Interventions (STAWI) Project. STAWI, a five-year initiative, collaborates with county governments across nine counties in northern and southeastern Kenya (Garissa, Isiolo, Marsabit, Samburu, Turkana, Wajir, Kitui, Makueni and Taita Taveta) to enhance water security and meet social, economic and environmental demands.

NRT East

The Region held a three-day workshop on governance, rangelands management, wildlife protection, procurement, finance, audit, risk and compliance, gender and social inclusion, grants and fundraising, communications and human rights, to enhance the management capacity of conservancy leaders. 16 community conservancy managers, staff members, regional programme leads, and NRT and MashinaniWORKS programme and

department leads attended the event, whose discussions also included conservancy updates, achievements and challenges encountered in the past six months.

NRT West

NRT West held its first regional Council of Elders meeting of the year to review its 2023 performance, milestones achieved and challenges encountered and make plans for 2024. Conservancy chairpersons, managers, rangelands coordinators, wardens and staff members, and NRT department representatives attended the meeting, in which a regional chairperson was elected.

NRT Mountain

The Region and 30 conservancy scouts from eight community conservancies joined the Kenya Wildlife Service and Laikipia County Government officials, among other stakeholders, in commemorating World Wildlife Day on the 4th of March. The event, whose theme was "Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation," featured a two-kilometre walk from the Equator marker to Kanu Grounds in Nanyuki Town.

CONSERVANCY UPDATES



Sera

The Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Alfred Mutua, and the Tourism Principal Secretary, John Ololtuaa, visited the Conservancy, to learn more about its community-led wildlife protection efforts and the conservation of white and black rhinos.



Kalepo

A groundbreaking ceremony was held at the construction site of the Oromodei Water Project. Representatives from the Samburu County Government, the national government and World Vision Kenya attended the event.



Ltungai

During the Conservancy's quarterly board meeting, board members resolved to convene an annual general meeting in April this year.



Nasulu

The Grazing Committee conducted field visits across the Conservancy to review the status of its grazing blocks and identify potential rehabilitation sites. The Conservancy aims at rehabilitating approximately 100 acres as it implements the first phase of its 2024 rangelands rehabilitation plan.



Nannapa, Nanapisho, Naapu and Narupa

52 community conservancy scouts from Nannapa, Nanapisho, Naapu and Narupa underwent a four-day refresher training on wildlife monitoring, anti-poaching law enforcement, general conservancy scout discipline, standard operating procedures and human rights, at Nannapa's headquarters, enhancing their performance.



Narupa

Narupa held its first annual general meeting, during which community members discussed the Conservancy's 2023 performance and developed strategies for implementing 2024 plans.



Melako

The Conservancy hosted the Marsabit Women Peace Forum, converging 250 women and morans from diverse communities in Isiolo and Marsabit Counties to discuss ways to end inter-ethnic conflict and foster lasting peace.



Shurr

MashinaniWORKS' Rangelands Sacco, with support from Agence Française de Développement, disbursed a Ksh 3 million boda boda microcredit fund that benefitted 15

young entrepreneurs. Through the fund, each of the 15 youth received a brand-new motorbike, enabling them to launch or expand their business ventures.



Songa

NRT's Peace team facilitated a peacebuilding meeting convened to develop measures to end cattle rustling and inter-ethnic violence. 42 leaders and representatives of morans attended the event.



Naibunga Central

Area chiefs, conservancy board members and grazing committee members from Musul, Kijabe and Nkiloriti met to discuss rangelands management, the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project, grazing plans, and the control of *Opuntia stricta*, an invasive species.



Naibunga Upper, Shulmai and Maiyanat

MashinaniWORKS conducted a business training for 70 Ujuzi Manyattani Programme trainees from the three community conservancies, to sensitise them on the importance of undertaking vocational skills for personal and economic development and joining a sacco.



Kaptuya

A meeting was held to raise awareness of the negative environmental impacts of charcoal burning and develop mitigation measures. Community members present resolved to champion campaigns to stop charcoal burning.



Pate

On the 1st of March at Shanga Ishakani Village, the Conservancy celebrated World Seagrass Day, and conducted a campaign to promote awareness of the role of seagrass in creating healthier oceans and coastlines, and mitigating climate change.



Kiunga

The Conservancy conducted board elections and elected a new chairperson.





Video Highlight of the Month

In northern Kenya, water scarcity is prevalent due to climate change, unreliable seasonal water sources, environmental degradation and lack of infrastructure, among other factors.

Across the Laikipia-Isiolo Border, the Tura-Narasha Water Project implemented by NRT, is improving access to water while promoting peace between the Tura and Tiamamut communities in Naibunga Community Conservancy, Laikipia County, and the Narasha and Parkuruk in Isiolo County. Watch [this video](#) for more on this life-changing project.



In the Media

KTN News

[Faida ya hewa chafu Samburu](#)



[10 counties represented at Isiolo women's rights meeting](#)

[300 herders graduate: course aimed at ending cattle rustling](#)

Citizen TV

[Wanawake wafugaji wajumuisha kwenye uongozi wa jamii zao](#)

[Utunzaji wa vyanzo vya maji: wanamazingira Samburu wazidisha utunzaji wa vyanzo vya maji](#)



Look Up TV

[Wanawake wa kudumisha mazingira waandaa mkutano wa mwaka](#)

[Women in pastoralist regions benefit from financial literacy programmes](#)



The Standard

[Youth in arid areas acquire skills in fight against cattle rustling](#)



The Star

[Marsabit boda boda operators benefit as micro-finance credit launched](#)
[Isiolo, Marsabit women and youth undergo training on peacebuilding](#)



People Daily

[Vocational training skills earning rural youth decent living](#)
[Marsabit marks World Wildlife Day amid charcoal burning concerns](#)



Kenya News Agency

[Marsabit County marks World Wildlife Day amid concerns over charcoal burning](#)
[Ksh 20 million Tura Water Project fostering peace at Isiolo and Laikipia border](#)



The Press Point

[Conservancy-led sacco transforming indigenous lives in 9 counties](#)
[Ufugaji Bora Programme offers economic lifeline to pastoralists faced with climatic shocks](#)



Tukio News

[I am now financially free, woman says as sacco empowers groups](#)
[Ufugaji Bora Mashinani to transform pastoralism](#)



The Eastleigh Voice

[Sacco promotes financial inclusion of pastoral women](#)
[300 herders graduate after training on modern livestock practices](#)



Kamachu TV

[Wanachama wa sacco ya NRT wapata zawadi nono katika maisha yao](#)
[NRTT yazidi kuwa baraka kwa vijana na kina mama kutoka Isiolo, Marsabit, Laikipia na Samburu](#)



Nagaa Radio Kenya

[Northern rangelands annual delegates meeting](#)

Culex Media



[Sacco powering pastoralists to financial inclusion! How lives are being transformed in 9 counties](#)

Inooro TV



[Gĩthima kwenjwo Tura na mworoto wa kũnyotora aikari na kũnina ngucanio cia maaĩ Samburu na Laikipia](#)



KBC TV

[Financial literacy skills offered to youth and women in Isiolo](#)

Transforming lives through our community conservancy model remains at the heart of all we do. Our sincere thanks go to our partners and donors who unfailingly support our operations and programmes, ensuring we continuously make progress in increasing the climate resilience of the communities we serve.



ASANTENI SANA

The Northern Rangelands Trust would like to thank the following principal donors, partners, and investors (with many more listed on our website) for their invaluable support.

County Governments



Donors



Partners

