



NRT NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2023





NRT Newsletter

August 2023 Issue

Dear NRT Partners,

At NRT, we combine homegrown solutions with world-class management systems and planning to resolve existing and emerging environmental issues. Relentless in our pursuit of progress, we never stop finding better ways to preserve nature and increase communities' resilience against climate change.

Working hand in hand with our partners, we are ushering in a new era of conservation as we implement climate solutions in northern and coastal Kenya and Uganda. We are honoured to have the opportunity to discuss the lessons we have learnt, the milestones we have achieved, and the impact we are having, at the Africa Climate Summit.

In this August edition of our newsletter, we reveal how in collaboration, we are leveraging state-of-the-art technology to monitor and protect endangered species across 6.2 million acres of rangelands.

Follow along, as we share the life-saving actions we have taken to advance wildlife conservation, and provide you with updates and highlights on the 43 member community conservancies we serve.

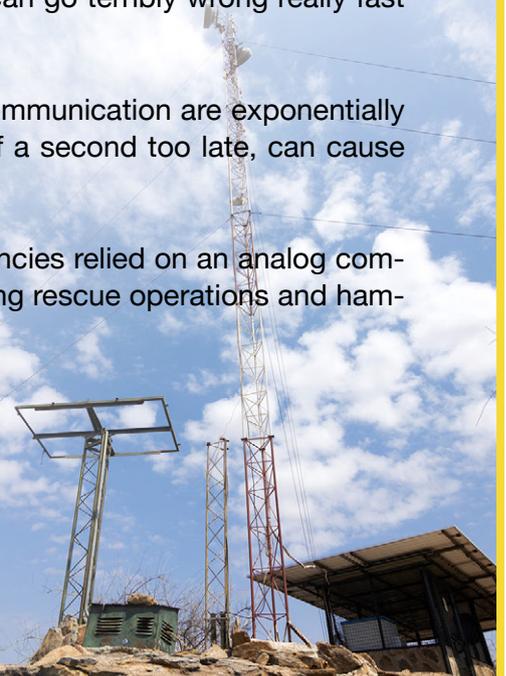
Scaling New Heights of Wildlife Conservation: Africa's Largest IoT Network Deployed in NRT Member Community Conservancies

We see it in our homes and our places of work. Situations can go terribly wrong really fast when there is a breakdown in communication.

For wildlife rangers working in the field, the effects of miscommunication are exponentially worse, and information, if inaccurate or arrives a fraction of a second too late, can cause injury and loss of life for human beings and wildlife.

Until recently, rangers in NRT member community conservancies relied on an analog communication system, which posed significant challenges during rescue operations and hampered wildlife monitoring.

Over the last three years, NRT has been implementing an ambitious project that has seen its radio network upgraded and an Internet of Things (IoT) network established and expanded, creating a vast communication web that connects 22 NRT member community conservancies, with plans underway to bring more on board.



Deployed in collaboration with Connected Conservation Foundation, Cisco, 51 Degrees, EarthRanger, and the European Union's Community Policing Initiative Biolive Project, NRT's is Africa's largest landscape-wide, IoT conservation network.

The first of its kind in Kenya, it is enhancing the protection of endangered species and the conservation of natural resources by leveraging cloud-based sensors and networks to collect, monitor, and analyze environmental data in real time.

NRT upgraded the radio network in three phases. In the first, power monitors were installed and a substantial upgrade of power supplies was undertaken, while in the second, Low-Power, Long-Range (LoRa) technology was introduced, connecting all conservancies to a wide area network. Finally, EarthRanger systems were installed in NRT member community conservancies, enabling them to track and monitor wildlife and rangers in the field.

Using EarthRanger software, NRT is also able to monitor water stations and levels digitally and collect vital information for managing water resources. This cutting-edge technology has enabled NRT member community conservancies to track wildlife, including endangered species such as black rhinos and elephants, and detect poaching activities—all in real time.

Sera Rhino Sanctuary, for example, now provides live footage to NRT's Joint Operations Communication Center (JOCC) for real-time rhino tracking, elevating wildlife protection to new heights.

For Samuel Lekimaroro, NRT's Wildlife Protection Manager, the radio technology upgrade and the establishment of the IoT network are welcome developments as they have made it easier to conduct conservancy patrols.

NRT's IoT Network



Is Africa's largest landscape-wide network



Features Long-Range (LoRa) and EarthRanger technology



Wildlife in 22 conservancies monitored in real-time, across 6.2 million acres of rangelands



He vividly recalls an incident in which a ranger sustained an injury while on patrol in Mukogodo Forest, and contact with him was lost, necessitating a rescue operation in the dead of night. “All field patrol teams can now be monitored and coordinated by the team in headquarters, which is the central location,” he says.

The upgraded radio network and the newly established IoT network have massively improved communication within and across NRT member community conservancies, enhancing and boosting ranger patrols, wildlife protection, and conservation of endangered species.

The Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project: Transforming Lives, Powering Progress in Isiolo County

For years in Biliqo Bulesa Community Conservancy and its environs in Isiolo County, maternal mortality has been a major concern given the area’s restricted access to a lifesaving facility for safe deliveries.

The rates of death of mothers and infants have been high in the County, which is one of six regions in Kenya accounting for more than half of all maternal death cases. According to United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) statistics, out of every 100,000 deliveries in Isiolo County, 790 mothers die.

This high maternal mortality rate is attributed to several factors including, long distances between health facilities, inadequately stocked health facilities, a lack of skilled personnel, low education levels, and cultural factors such as female genital mutilation.

In 2020, in collaboration with the Isiolo County Government and supported by the Danish International Development Agency and Hungary Helps, NRT established Biliqo Dispensary, with a fully equipped maternity wing, in Merti Sub-county in Isiolo County.

Over 180 safe deliveries have been carried out in the new maternity wing since its opening in March 2020, giving the community access to proper healthcare. Before Biliqo Dispensary’s



construction, the nearest maternal and child health facilities were located in Isiolo Town, approximately 210 kilometers away—a six-hour bus ride. The absence of reliable public transport to ferry women to hospitals during emergencies compounded the issue.

2022 saw Biliqo Bulesa Community Conservancy receive Carbon Community Fund (CCF) support from the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project, enabling the Conservancy to purchase a Land Cruiser.

The vehicle has increased access to critical healthcare, saved lives, and brought Isiolo County one step closer to decreasing maternal deaths, as it transports expectant women from Cherab Sub-county in Isiolo County to Biliqo Dispensary for antenatal care, or to Isiolo County Teaching and Referral Hospital during medical emergencies.

“Initially, we would trek for long distances, and expectant women would suffer the most during emergencies,” explains Dathe Omar, a Biliqo Bulesa community member.

Locals also use the community-owned Land Cruiser to travel to markets, increasing their access to economic opportunities and improving their livelihoods. For the Conservancy, whose operations are supported by the United States Agency for International Development, Taronga Zoo Sydney, and Agence Française de Développement, the Land Cruiser has made rangelands management and patrols easier, enhancing safety.

In Isiolo County, the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project (NKRCP) is not only funding development projects but also advancing education. In March this year, three NRT member community conservancies in the County launched NKRCP-funded education bursaries worth Ksh 19 million, benefitting 4,600 students.

The NKRCP spans 1.9 million hectares (4.7 million acres) of northern Kenya and is the world’s largest soil carbon removal project. It is anticipated to remove 50 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over 30 years—the equivalent of the annual emissions from over 10,000,000 cars—and generate sustainable income from carbon credit sales for indigenous communities, increasing their resilience to climate change.



[To learn more about the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project, please click here](#)



Biashara Mashinani: The NRT Trading Program Increasing the Climate Resilience of Pastoralists

The world belongs to the people who play a poor hand well, to those who have the guts to defy gravity and rise up after life knocks them down. Charles Loyatoman, undisputedly, is one of them.

Throughout primary and secondary school, this 27-year-old entrepreneur from Masol Community Conservancy in West Pokot County experienced financial difficulties, turning his hopes of attaining a university education into a pipe dream.

Despite running what seemed like an endless obstacle race, Charles never stopped reaching for the stars. In 2020, he moved to his current home in Orwa trading centre and developed a business plan. With the little he earned from casual work, he opened a modest barbershop that offered phone charging services.

For a year, this was his bread and butter until he discovered NRT Trading's Biashara Mashinani Program, which trains pastoralists in entrepreneurship, diversifying their income streams and building their resilience at a time when climate change and its effects, particularly drought, pose a threat to livestock, their main source of livelihood.

"I was happy to learn about the Biashara Mashinani training, which would be provided by our conservancy's management. I needed guidance since I had just started my business and wanted to grow," Charles explains.

Charles enthusiastically attended the Program's three-day module 1 business training, after which he obtained a Ksh 25,000 loan from the Northern Rangelands Sacco (NR Sacco), becoming one of many beneficiaries of its credit facilities.

In early 2021, Charles invested the loan in an agrovet business, after noticing a need for one in his locality. He consulted with expert veterinaries before launching the business, increasing his chances of success. His agrovet shop has made it easier for community members in Masol Conservancy to access farming supplies.



Biashara Mashinani taught Charles the importance of diversifying his income, and he now sells clothes in addition to his agrovet business.

In 2022, Charles used Ksh 35,000 he had saved to open a retail shop in Orwa Town, where he sells in-demand household goods. His successful repayment of any loans he obtained from NR Sacco resulted in him unlocking a higher



Biashara Mashinani taught me good financial habits like saving and recordkeeping. Now, I have a savings account that has helped me during emergencies and in expanding my businesses. Running multiple businesses at the same time has been easy since I can keep records and track growth.

Charles Loyatoman,
Masol Community Conservancy

borrowing limit. Charles then borrowed Ksh 50,000 from the Sacco to increase stock in his retail shop.

Recently, 40 outstanding entrepreneurs in the Biashara Mashinani Program qualified for advanced training. Charles was one of them. He attributes his success to his zeal for knowledge and commitment to growth.

Charles currently makes over Ksh 60,000 every month from his businesses. He employs one person, and aspires to create more opportunities for his peers, while encouraging them to venture into entrepreneurship.

Leading the Way to a Greener Future: NRT's 2023 Biannual Report

Despite encountering headwinds between January and June 2023, NRT and our 43 member community conservancies made a real difference for people and nature.

Our 2023 Biannual Report takes a look at our programmatic impact in the first half of the year, the challenges we surmounted—with your support—and the progress we made in strengthening governance, building peace, transforming lives, and conserving natural resources.

Inside the Report, you will find exciting updates from the field and the world of conservation, and details of game-changing actions we took to increase the resilience of the indigenous communities in our member conservancies.



[To read the full 2023 Biannual Report, please click here:](#)



NRT Member Community Conservancies Commemorate World Ranger Day

Rangers are unsung heroes who are critical in the preservation of the planet's ecosystem and wildlife.

On the 31st of July, rangers from NRT member community conservancies joined their counterparts across the globe in commemorating World Ranger Day and paying tribute to fallen rangers and those injured in the line of duty.

Rangers from NRT member community conservancies In Isiolo and Samburu Counties marked the day with a ceremony attended by the Isiolo County Government led by the Deputy Governor, Dr. James Lowasa, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), and other partners.

The event was also held to celebrate the advancements made in the Laikipia-Isiolo-Samburu-Meru National Park ecosystem, as a result of rangers' efforts, including the recovery of endangered wildlife, increased community understanding of natural resource conservation, and a flourishing wildlife population.

In NRT Coast, ten rangers were named the best-performing rangers in their respective community conservancies at a ceremony held in Malindi Marine National Park in collaboration with the KWS.

Four others received special recognition and awards for their conservation of the endangered sea turtle and hirola and their outstanding wildlife protection efforts.



Wildlife Rangers Need Your Help

The International Ranger Federation reports that between June 2022 and May 2023, 148 rangers lost their lives in the line of duty. Africa alone, lost 65 rangers. These conservation heroes and heroines risk their lives every day by working in difficult, dangerous, and wild environments.

Please consider donating to support our rangers' wildlife protection efforts. No amount is too small.



[Every dollar you give will be matched by the Scheinberg Relief Fund, doubling your impact. To donate, click here:](#)



NRT Member Community Conservancies Celebrate International Youth Day

On the 12th of August, NRT member community conservancies joined the rest of the world in recognizing the vital role youth play in society by commemorating International Youth Day, whose theme this year was 'Green Skills for Youth: Towards a Sustainable World'.

In northern Kenya, NRT East participated in an event organized by the Isiolo County Government in collaboration with other regional partners, in which NRT Trading's Ujuzi Manyattani beneficiaries showcased their newly acquired vocational skills.

At NRT Coast, Kiunga Community Conservancy, in Lamu County, marked the occasion by organizing a beach cleanup under the Conservancy's Bahari Moja Ocean Plastic Recycling Project.

During the exercise, youth and women conservation champions concentrated their

efforts on nesting sites of the endangered sea turtle, collecting 2.1 tonnes of plastic and other non-biodegradable marine litter.

Youth from NRT member community conservancies also attended the Kenya Wildlife Conservancy Association's (KWCA) two-day National Conservancies Youth Forum and joined 37 youth from regional conservancy associations in validating the KWCA's Youth Engagement in Wildlife Conservancies Strategy, which they had previously formulated in 2021 and 2022.





Newsbytes from Across the NRT Landscape

REGIONAL NEWS

NRT East

- Sixteen chairpersons from NRT East community conservancies gathered for the bi-annual Council of Elders meeting to evaluate their conservancies' progress and discuss cross-cutting issues, including drought, community safety, government partnerships, the development of supportive legislation, and the inclusion of women in governance. Recommendations and matters arising from this meeting will be presented to the NRT Council of Elders on the 19th of September.
- NRT held its inaugural women in rangelands training for 36 women leaders from various groups in Songa Community Conservancy in Marsabit County. The training covered various topics including women's role in rangeland management, planned grazing, climate change, rangeland degradation, and rangeland improvement methods. Following their training, each of the 36 women leaders will share their newly acquired knowledge with 600 other women in the Conservancy.

NRT Centre

- The Region convened a three-day meeting in Sera Community Conservancy, bringing together 85 morans from 10 NRT Centre community conservancies, to deliberate on economic empowerment, peacebuilding, and rangelands management. During the meeting, 55 morans who visited the Mara landscape to learn about rangeland management shared their insights with their peers.

The meeting led to the creation of the Samburu Morans Council, consisting of 75 people who will help lead initiatives related to peace, rangelands, and other programs, and serve as representatives of the morans in NRT Centre.

The Samburu County Executive Committee Member for Tourism, Raphael Lenayara, seven members of the Samburu County Assembly, and national government administrative officers also attended the meeting.

- NRT Centre, in collaboration with San Diego Zoo Global Alliance's Twiga Walinzi team, convened a meeting to discuss the poaching of giraffes and other wildlife and develop effective mitigation measures. NRT member community conservancies from Samburu and Isiolo Counties, county government officials from both counties, and conservation partners Samburu National Reserve, Buffalo Springs National Reserve, and Grevy's Zebra Trust attended the meeting.

NRT West

- Four Chairpersons of NRT West Community Conservancies (Masol, Pellow, Kaptuya, and Ruko) met in Kapenguria Town in West Pokot County, to deliberate on the progress made by the conservancies since the beginning of the year, the challenges faced, and lessons learnt. The issues they raised and their recommendations will be presented to the NRT Council of Elders on the 19th of September.
- The Region's team completed a fundraising training in Kapenguria, West Pokot County, that increased their capacity to effectively fundraise and perform donor reporting.

NRT Mountain

The NRT Mountain team organized a grazing management meeting, which brought together community conservancy leaders to discuss the rangelands management milestones achieved, the challenges encountered, and goals for the coming quarter.

NRT Coast

The region held a managers' and regional council of elders meeting during which conservancy plans and progress were discussed. The meeting's agenda also included 2022 conservancy audit feedback and regional crosscutting issues, such as the Water Sector Trust Fund Project's implementation status. An update was also provided on microfinance initiatives and plans for a feasibility study for six terrestrial carbon and biodiversity projects.

CONSERVANCIES



Sericho

Ramgharia Youth Association, supported by UK-based Khalsa Aid International, donated 500 relief aid hampers, seven tonnes of various food rations, and other basic commodities, to the Conservancy, assisting community members who were most affected by last year's prolonged drought, and the flooding caused by this year's March to May rainy season.



Kalama

The Nature Conservancy Africa's Regional Director, Ademola Ajagbe, visited Kalama Resource Centre and assessed the progress of this project, which is nearly complete and whose establishment will improve Kalama Community Conservancy's sustainability.



Melako

Melako Community Conservancy’s newly elected board underwent a training session in leadership and management. The Board also elected officials for the finance, tourism and education sub-committees.



Shurr and Songa

A three-day entrepreneurship and financial inclusion training was conducted for 90 Ujuzi Manyattani Program participants in Shurr and Songa. The training aimed at enhancing financial literacy and fostering entrepreneurship, innovation in business, and long-term business growth.



Jaldesa

A delegation from the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) visited the Conservancy and DANIDA-funded project sites and interacted with the Conservancy’s board and community members.



Il Ngwesi and Lekurruki

The two community conservancies reviewed their conservancy scouts’ patrol blocks and locations to improve the effectiveness of patrols.



Kalepo

60 morans underwent a two-day rangelands management training at the Kalepo’s headquarters. The morans also resolved to work closely with the Grazing Committee and participate actively in conservancy matters.



Meibae

30 team members from the Conservancy’s grazing management board, local and county representatives, and partners undertook a three-day learning trip in Mara North Conservancy, gaining insights on the conservation models practised in the Southern Conservation Area, land tenure system, and tourism management.



Kinna

The Conservancy’s Board held its quarterly meeting in which they evaluated the Conservancy Livelihoods Fund and the issuance of education bursaries, and developed a checklist to ensure accountability in bursary disbursement.





Pate

A team from The Nature Conservancy visited Pate and learnt about sustainable fishing and temporary octopus closures from its women fishers.



Leparua

The Conservancy conducted human rights and Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) training for 200 community members.



Video of the Month

For 40-year-old Tom Putunoi, from Kimanjo, Laikipia County, life has never been the same since his mother was tragically attacked by an elephant just a few meters from her farm, as her grandchildren playing nearby watched helplessly.

To avert further loss of human life and prevent incidents of human-elephant conflict, Naibunga Community Conservancy, in collaboration with partners including the Kenya Wildlife Service, and supported by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, erected a 40-kilometer electric fence in the Conservancy to keep elephants out of settlement areas while still allowing the free movement of people and livestock.

[Watch this video to see how the fence has made life easier for Tom and other community members in Naibunga Community Conservancy.](#)





In the Media



Citizen TV Kenya

[Maadhimisho ya siku ya walenzi wa misitu yafanyika katika Kaunti ya Isiolo](#)

[Juhudi za kutoa mafunzo kwa vijana katika kaunti ya Isiolo zapingezwa](#)

[Pate Women Lead The Way In Octopus Fishing, Reaping Bountiful Rewards](#)



Kenya News Agency

[KWS, NRT Perform Cleaning Exercise In Marsabit](#)

[Northern Rangeland Trust Unveils Empowerment Program For Herders](#)



K24 TV

[Kenya joins the rest of the world in marking World Ranger Day in Isiolo](#)



KBC Channel 1

[Isiolo County lauds rangers for reduction of poaching incidents](#)



TV47

[Shirika la Northern Rangelands Trust kaunti ya West Pokot limetoa tahadhari kwa wakaazi kutunza mazingira katika kukabili mabadaliko ya tabianchi](#)



Nomad Times

[WORLD RANGERS DAY IN ISIOLO](#)



IBSE GUMMI RADIO KENYA

[Wito umetolewa kwa wakazi kukoma kuchoma makaa](#)



Angaaf Radio

[Youth Day talk show](#)



The Star

[USAID to train pastoralists to boost livestock yields](#)



Tuko.co.ke

[How Samburu Herders Successfully Lobby for Funding, Better Veterinary Supplies](#)

As we continue to work to increase communities' resilience against climate change, our efforts in northern and coastal Kenya and Uganda, are bolstered by our ever dependable partners and donors.

Thank you for your unwavering support of our conservation and community development programs.

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.

