



# NRT NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2023







# NRT Newsletter

## June 2023 Issue

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Dear NRT Partners,

Conventional wisdom has it that one should be like water and stay liquid.

Therefore, just like water—the elixir of life—we strive to remain adaptable while serving our member community conservancies and addressing their pressing needs. Our programs have in-built agility and flexibility, so they remain aligned with changing community priorities and continue to have a lasting impact at the grassroots level.

Our Water Program is casting ripples of positive change across the NRT landscape. With our partners' support, the Water Team is surmounting tough terrain challenges to establish water infrastructure in arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs), transforming lives and livelihoods, accelerating the achievement of the Global Goals, and mitigating human-wildlife conflict.

This June newsletter shares the pioneering actions we have taken to build reservoirs of hope, along with other exciting updates from NRT and our member community conservancies.

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### **Flow of Hope:** Transforming Lives in Remote Baringo County through Reliable Water Solutions

Water is an invaluable life-sustaining force.

Joseph Akeno, a livestock keeper from Loyamorok Ward in Tiaty East Sub-county in Baringo County, knows this fact too well. Most of the residents in the Ward, as well as their neighbors in Saimo Soi Ward, 20 kilometers away in Baringo North Sub-county, lack access to a reliable water source.





Lake Baringo's water is unsuitable for human consumption. Additionally, many people have encountered crocodiles and hippos while fetching water, with some sustaining injuries.

Joseph Akeno,  
Farmer, Loyamorok Village



For the residents of Loyamorok Ward, the main water source has been Lake Baringo (approximately 15 kilometers away) and a solar-powered borehole. The borehole's water volume fluctuates, frustrating the villagers who frequently wait in long queues for an elusive opportunity to fetch water from it.

Those living in remote Saimo Soi have suffered the most as they have had to depend on a *lugga*, (a seasonal watercourse), which is becoming increasingly unreliable.

"The water in Lake Baringo is unsuitable for human consumption. And many people have been attacked by crocodiles and hippos while fetching water from it, with some sustaining injuries. Our livestock have occasionally suffered the same fate. The area is also a bandit hotspot," bemoans Akeno.

While both Loyamorok and Saimo Soi Wards, home to the Pokot and Tugen communities, have plenty of pasture, perennial conflict in the two areas prevents wildlife, herders, and their livestock from accessing it, endangering their livelihoods.

Fortunately for these pastoralist communities, there is a glimmer of hope on the horizon. A new water project supported by the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) through the European Union-funded Kenya Rangelands Ecosystem Services Productivity Program (RangER), is





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We are confident that the area's population of kudus, gazelles and impalas, which had decreased in the past due to the absence of water, will gradually return when the dam's construction is complete.

Mary Barkilenya,  
Teacher, Yatya Primary School



working to construct water pans at Lemuyek (in Loyamorok Ward) and Simotwo (in Saimo Soi Ward), that will provide a reliable source of water for livestock, wildlife, and domestic use. The project seeks to reduce cattle rustling, communal strife, and human-wildlife conflict caused by competition for water. It also aims at improving the lives and livelihoods of the community members in the two wards and increasing their income from the sale of healthy livestock.

In May this year, NRT facilitated the organization of community engagement meetings in both Loyamorok and Saimo Soi Wards, and a five-member Project Implementation Committee was established in each of the two wards.

This June, the two water pans' designated sites were officially handed over to the contractor. Their construction is underway, and the project is scheduled for completion in two months. The water pans, which are expected to hold 35,000 cubic meters of water each, will collect surface runoff water and supply it to Loyamorok and Saimo Soi Wards.

“Overreliance on pastoralism and subsistence farming along Lake Baringo's shores has led to biodiversity loss and recurrent conflict, decimating livelihoods. The construction of the two water pans will significantly reduce conflict over the resources in the area, and ease access and availability of water for domestic use, livestock, and wildlife,” explains Aloise Naitirra, the European Union (EU) RangER Program Coordinator.

EU RangER Program aims at improving the livelihoods of communities and landscapes in the four member counties of the Cooperation on Peace and Development (CoPaD) bloc, i.e., Laikipia, Samburu, Isiolo, and Baringo, by increasing the productivity of the ecosystem services provided by rangelands and supporting climate-smart natural resource management, effective governance, and peace and security for wildlife and people.



## Building Brighter Futures: Empowering Women, Conserving Nature, through BeadWORKS

Across the vast northern Kenya landscape, where income-generating opportunities are scarce, a remarkable transformation is taking place.

NRT Trading's BeadWORKS, a handicraft program that taps into the region's rich beading culture, is empowering women to monetize their traditional skills. The Program is not only generating much-needed income but is also a powerful force for positive change.

Fueled by the goal of conserving natural resources and wildlife, BeadWORKS promotes sustainable, social, and ethical enterprise and supports self-governed, community-owned conservancies. This life-changing program has created income-generating opportunities for 1,200 women in eight NRT member community conservancies, including 110 exceptional Star Beaders.

Using beads, these phenomenal women create stunning jewelry and meticulously-stitched, bags belts, and other accessories, for sale to customers in Kenya, Europe, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, as well as on the BeadWORKS e-commerce website. In many respects, BeadWORKS is a lifeline for the women in northern Kenya's pastoralist communities.

The region faces significant challenges.

Climate change poses an existential threat, disrupting northern Kenya's once-stable live-stock economy. Faced with limited options, some community members have resorted to unsustainable and unlawful income-generation practices such as tree-cutting and charcoal production.

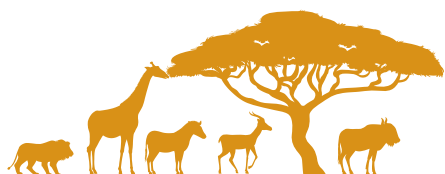
These activities degrade the environment, destroy precious natural resources, and endanger wildlife.



“Before joining the BeadWORKS Program, I would cut down trees to make charcoal for sale to provide for my family. I felt I had no choice because I was desperate for money. Through BeadWORKS, I have learned to appreciate the importance of caring for the environment.” Janet Kimiri, a BeadWORKS beneficiary from Il Ngwesi Community Conservancy, explains. Janet’s story is not unique. Countless other women, driven by the lack of viable options, found themselves engaging in illegal economic activities. Thanks to BeadWORKS, they no longer have to.

The Program has expanded the women’s horizons and instilled in them a deep appreciation for environmental stewardship.

In a beautiful symbiotic relationship, the BeadWORKS women support conservation efforts by giving 5% of their total annual sales to their respective conservancies. From 2017 to 2022 alone, these dedicated women collectively contributed an impressive Ksh 8,383,976 to their conservancies.



**Ksh 8,383,976**

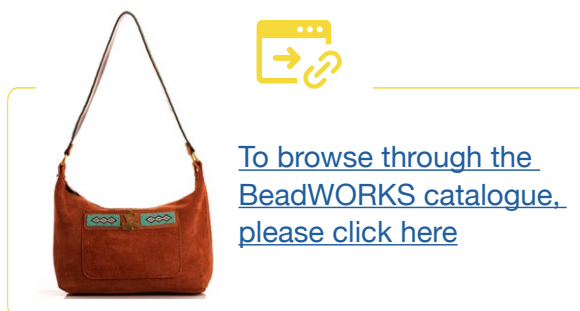
contributed to support conservation efforts from BeadWORKS women from 2017-2022

Their contribution finances crucial conservation initiatives that benefit entire communities. BeadWORKS has renewed the hope of northern Kenya’s women and given them a sense of purpose. By aligning their work with sustainability and environmental preservation principles, the women are creating exquisite works of art while building a brighter future for themselves, their communities, and the breathtaking natural wonders surrounding them.

BeadWORKS continues to shine a light on the transformative power of empowering women in community conservancies and nurturing a deep connection with the environment. With each piece the pastoralist women at BeadWORKS create, they are building a more sustainable, inclusive, and harmonious world.

In a grand win for the beaders at BeadWORKS and the Program, the BeadWORKS website has been nominated for the Best International/Export E-commerce Website Award in the 2023 Kenya eCommerce Awards! We are deeply honoured by this recognition of the Program and the women’s phenomenal work.

Please take a moment to check out the website for the newest products. Each item on the site is impeccably crafted with love from northern Kenya. With every purchase you make, you support BeadWORKS’ incredibly talented women and their families, and bolster wildlife protection efforts and community-led conservation.



[To browse through the BeadWORKS catalogue, please click here](#)



## The President of Kenya Lauds NRT for Promoting Environmental Conservation

It was our greatest pleasure to welcome His Excellency Dr. William Ruto, President of Kenya, when he visited our booth at the 2023 Rhino Charge event, an off-road motorsport competition organized by the Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust to raise funds for conservation efforts in Kenya.

Tom Lalampaa, gave a presentation of our conservation work to the President, elucidating the programs we have implemented to protect wildlife and conserve natural resources, and the indigenous communities we serve.



This year's Rhino Charge competition was held at Nkoteiya Community Conservancy, an NRT member conservancy in Samburu County. Also in attendance was H.E. Lati Lelelit, the Samburu County Governor.



I am very happy with what NRT is doing to reseed some of our environmentally degraded areas. I want to promise you the collaboration, the working together, and the partnership of the Government of Kenya in working on matters environment. I have agreed with the County Governments of Isiolo, Laikipia, and Samburu that we are going to do everything possible to ensure that we conserve the environment, and make sure that wildlife, human beings, and biodiversity live together in harmony.



H.E. President William Ruto

## Safe at Last: How the Naibunga Community Triumphed over Tragedy and Human-Elephant Conflict

For years, Naibunga Community Conservancy has grappled with the issue of human-wildlife conflict.

Elephants have caused loss of human life and property, injuring some residents, and displacing others. Children heading to school, and women fetching water, have lived in constant fear of encountering an elephant on their way.

40-year-old Tom Putunoi, from Kimanjo, Laikipia County laid his mother to rest in 2014. She was herding her family's goats when she was attacked by an elephant. Her grandchildren were playing nearby and they watched helplessly as their grandmother was trampled to death by the elephant, just a few meters from her farm.

Several other community members have sustained injuries or lost their lives after encountering elephants, just like Putunoi's mother did. Understandably, this has been a major source of concern in the Conservancy. Naibunga Community Conservancy bor-

ders Isiolo County to the north and covers 466 square kilometers of Laikipia North Sub-county. Due to its extensive acreage, in 2018, the community divided the Conservancy into three units: Naibunga Upper, Naibunga Central, and Naibunga Lower.

The Naibunga Central and Lower Community Conservancies serve as an elephant corridor, connecting the Laikipia-Isiolo-Samburu-Marsabit wildlife circuit. A feasibility study conducted in 2019 by NRT in collaboration with Naibunga Community Conservancy revealed that children and women were most at risk of being attacked by elephants.

More recent data from the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) shows that since 2021, Laikipia County has reported 47 injuries and 12 fatalities, with two of the 12 occurring in Laikipia North.

According to the Naibunga Central Community Conservancy Chairman, Solomon Kaparo, many of the fatalities happened in settlement areas, and learning was disrupted





as children missed classes for fear of being attacked by an elephant on their way to or from school.

To avert further loss of human life and prevent incidents of human-elephant conflict, in 2022, Naibunga Community Conservancy and the KWS jointly erected a 40-kilometer electric fence in Naibunga Central to keep elephants out of settlement areas while still allowing the free movement of people and livestock.

The Laikipia North KWS Warden, Dhadho Makorani, reports that since the fence's construction, no deaths or injuries have been recorded. The two-line fence limits

elephant movement within settlement areas while allowing other wildlife and cattle to move freely.

The fence was also designed with camel access gates so herders could move their camels in and out with ease. "People who live in settlement areas now feel safer and can finally go about their daily lives without fear," says the Conservancy Chairman.

The KWS, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, and other partners funded the fence's construction, which is wholly managed by the Naibunga community conservancies and maintained by professional fencers.



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Since the fence's construction, no deaths or injuries have been recorded.

Dhadho Makorani,  
Laikipia North KWS Warden



## Ruko Community Conservancy Commemorates World Giraffe Day

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of June, the longest day of the year, Ruko Community Conservancy in Baringo County joined the world in honouring the giraffe, the tallest animal on earth.

The Conservancy, home to 15 endangered Rothschild's giraffes, celebrated the strides it has made in protecting these towering creatures, and the transformational impact of the species, whose conservation has fostered peace among the Il Chamus and Pokot. These two formerly hostile communities are now working together to conserve giraffes.

Between 2020 and 2021, the Conservancy, in collaboration with NRT, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Save Giraffes Now, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), embarked on an ambitious effort to rescue nine endangered Rothschild's giraffes that were marooned by rising waters on Longicharo Island, on the eastern shores of Lake Baringo.

The giraffes were translocated across the Lake to Ruko Giraffe Sanctuary, a purpose-built 17-square-kilometer haven in Ruko Community Conservancy. This enthralling rescue operation is chronicled by the film [‘Saving Giraffes: The Long Journey Home.’](#) now streaming on the National Geographic Wild Channel.

The translocated giraffes are thriving, thanks to the care of a dedicated team of conservancy scouts, a safe habitat, sufficient vegetation, and partners' support. Their population has increased from nine initially to 15, with a male calf being born in April this year.





## BeadWORKS: Powering Community Development in Laikipia Through Conservation

NRT Trading's BeadWORKS Program contributed Ksh 2,006,222 in conservation fees to NRT member community conservancies in Laikipia County including Naibunga Lower, Naibunga Central, Lekurruki, and Il Ng'wesi.

The contribution, which amounts to 5% of annual BeadWORKS sales will support the conservancies' operations and projects of the communities' choice.

Additionally, 35 women from the Il Ngwesi Community Conservancy graduated after completing a four-module training on NRT's transformational Leadership and Management Program (LAMP), which seeks to train, educate, and equip indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs) to exercise their human rights, manage their land, conserve natural resources and wildlife, and secure their livelihoods.

## Ujuzi Manyattani Expands its Footprint to Kiunga Community Conservancy, Lamu County

NRT Trading's Ujuzi Manyattani Program has landed in Lamu County! The Program has expanded its activities to coastal Kenya and anchored itself in Kiunga Community Wildlife Association (KICOWA), with the goal of training at least 30 local youth in boat engine repair and tailoring.

Ujuzi Manyattani, a mobile, village-based vocational training program, collaborates with polytechnics to teach in-demand skills to women and youth in NRT member community conservancies, promoting livelihood diversification and encouraging entrepreneurship, breaking poverty and conflict cycles.

The Program is funded by USAID's Local Works Program and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and is implemented in partnership with the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA).

## We are In!

### NRT Team Takes on the 2023 Wildlife Ranger Challenge



We are proud to once again join over 100 teams of rangers across the African continent in competing in the fourth annual Wildlife Ranger Challenge.

Coordinated by Tusk and the Game Rangers Association of Africa, the Wildlife Ranger Challenge is a fundraising initiative featuring a series of fitness challenges culminating in a 21-kilometer half-marathon race on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

Rangers are unsung heroes who not only fight poaching, but also serve as conservationists, teachers, community support workers, leaders, and much more! The Wildlife Ranger Challenge celebrates their many roles while raising much-needed funds to support their work.

There is plenty of room for participation in the Wildlife Ranger Challenge. Want to get involved? Join the global virtual event on 16<sup>th</sup> September and run 5, 10, or 21 kilometers to raise funds for wildlife rangers wherever you are in the world.

To prepare for the 21-kilometer race, our rangers are participating in a targeted training program, designed to improve and test their physical fitness. You could train like a ranger and take on the Wildlife Ranger Mini Challenges to test your limits.

Prefer a less strenuous path? Simply [donate to the cause here](#) or join the conversation on social media using #ForWildlifeRangers to speak up for Africa's rangers—brave men and women who have devoted their lives to safeguarding wildlife on the continent.



## Newsbytes from the Conservancies

### REGIONAL NEWS

#### NRT Coast

- The community in Lower Tana Delta Conservancy, one of the seven NRT Coastal conservancies planted over 28,100 mangroves in an effort to restore degraded mangrove habitats. The NRT Coast team worked jointly with the conservancy and four Community Forest Associations (CFAs) to establish 23 tree nurseries holding 9,516 mangrove seedlings.



**28,100**

mangroves planted  
in Lower Tana Delta  
Conservancy

#### NRT Centre

- The NRT Centre Team attended a knowledge exhibition organized by USAID's Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth (PREG) initiative, in Maralal, Samburu County. The exhibition converged representatives from the USAID Kenya Mission and PREG partners working in the region. At the exhibition, the PREG partners showcased their projects and created synergies, to support indigenous communities in building resilience. Hon. Lati Lelelit, the Samburu County Governor, attended the event.

Formed in 2013, PREG is a coordination platform that unites multiple USAID implementing partners with other actors to leverage resources and generate a knowledge management platform.



- The NRT Centre Team convened a conservancies' audit review meeting, attended by the conservancies' finance committees, managers, accountants, and a team from the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project (NKRCP), to discuss challenges that were uncovered during an audit and ways to address them.

### **NRT West**

- The Region held its first peace stakeholders meeting to raise awareness about the community conservancy model, identify the current peacebuilding gaps in West Pokot County, and form a committee for coordinating peace interventions by state and non-state actors in the county. Peace actors and national government security agencies' officials attended the meeting.

### **NRT Mountain:**

- The Region conducted a meeting to discuss 2022 audit reports, auditor recommendations, conservancy requirements and progress, and review the external audit findings of five community conservancies (Il Ngwesi, Lekurruki, and Naibunga (Upper, Central, and Lower)).

### **NRT East**

- The Region's Rangelands and Research Departments undertook a Veg-CoMMS and database refresher training of 20 conservancy rangelands coordinators before embarking on a rigorous field assessment in 12 community conservancies, visiting over 120 field transects to monitor rangelands' health.

The team observed an increase in vegetation cover due to recent rains.

- In June, Finance Sub-Committee members from each of the four NRT member community conservancies in Marsabit County participated in an understanding and resolution session of the audit and compliance cross-cutting concerns, referencing the 2023 Conservancy management letters. As a foundation of effective Conservancy governance, this will pave the way for prudent financial management, reporting, and financial accountability.



CONSERVANCIES



**Shurr**

Ujuzi Manyattani conducted an internal assessment of 30 trainees from Laikipia North Technical and Vocational College to examine their understanding of the skills taught, their performance and their progress.



**Ngilai**

Ngilai West held a successful Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project annual general meeting in which community members unanimously agreed to allocate funds for supporting education bursaries and resolved to comply with all Project requirements.



**Leparua**

The Conservancy organized a peace dialogue for elders, morans, and women from the Samburu, Turkana, Somali, and Maasai communities, to settle resource disputes between the Conservancy's four ethnic groups.



**Kalama**

The Conservancy Board convened to verify education bursary data, facilitating applicant identification and authentication before bursary issuance.



**Pate**

To commemorate World Environment Day, women from Faza Village collected over 14,000 mangrove seedlings on Pate Island to build a tree nursery for restoration in degraded mangrove areas. The women also raised awareness and advocated for environmental protection.



**Nasuulu**

The Conservancy hosted a team from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) who visited to learn about the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project, its benefits, and the issues that have emerged since the inception of the Carbon Community Fund (CCF).

**Il Ngwesi**



35 women graduated after completing a four-module training on NRT's transformational Leadership and Management Program (LAMP), which seeks to inform, equip and educate indigenous people and local com-



munities (IPLCs) on ways to exercise their human rights, manage their land, conserve natural resources and wildlife, and secure their livelihoods.

### Naibunga Lower & Central



The BeadWORKS Team conducted a product development assessment to drive product quality improvement. The assessment included a review of the materials used, the time required to make BeadWORKS products and labor requirements.

### Songa



The Conservancy distributed assorted food items to Lpus Primary School with funding from the Conservancy Livelihood Fund (CLF). Since 2016, NRT has been supporting the School through the Conservancy after it was identified as one of the schools with the most infrastructural needs and attendance issues due to dropouts and early marriages.

### Kinna



The Conservancy completed a four-day training on wildlife monitoring and data collection, of its scouts, to increase their understanding of the dynamics, population, health status, and movements of wildlife.



## Video of the Month



Communities in Kiunga Community Wildlife Association (KICOWA) are collecting plastic and other non-biodegradable waste from critical habitats turtle and fish habitats as they run a #BeatPlasticPollution campaign. [Please click on this link to watch a short video of steps they have taken to safeguard marine life and their livelihoods.](#)



## In the Media



DW News: [Saving the endangered Rothschild giraffe](#)



NTV: [Kenya marks World Giraffe Day](#)



Hope TV: [Wanawake wafugaji Laikipia wahitimu ujuzi wa kutengeneza shanga](#)



Citizen Digital: [Ilchamus, Pokot communities using conservation of the endangered Rothchild Giraffe to foster peace](#)

Citizen TV: [kina mama Laikipia Kaskazini wahitimu ushonaji shanga](#)

Citizen TV: [Wavuvi zaidi ya 200 katika kaunti ya Lamu wapewa vifaa salama vya uvuvi](#)

Kenya News Agency



Kenya News Agency: [Women Graduate In Beadwork Skills](#)

Kenya News: [Fishermen Benefit From Eco-Friendly Nets](#)



KTN: [Wavuvi wa Lamu watumia mbinu mpya za uvuvi kupitia ufadhili wa shirika la mazingira](#)



People Daily: [Lamu fishermen adopt new, sustainable fishing practices](#)



KBC: [Women Peace Council Established To Spearhead The Fight Against Cattle Rustling In Isiolo County](#)

We are honoured that indigenous communities in northern and coastal Kenya, and Uganda, have trusted us with the responsibility of serving and supporting them, as they build their future and increase their resilience against climate change.

We remain indebted to all our partners and donors, whose unflinching support propels us forward while we continue working to transform lives in NRT member community conservancies through conservation.



# 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.

