



# NRT NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2022







# NRT Newsletter

## September 2022 Issue

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Dear NRT Partners,

Peace—*amani* in Swahili—is a simple five-letter word. In its presence, the future is brighter, and hope abounds, while in its absence, progress stalls, goals remain unrealized, and unimaginable pain reigns.

For several indigenous communities in northern and coastal Kenya, the community conservancy model has ushered in a new dawn, bringing peace to regions that previously only knew unending cycles of violent intertribal clashes.

It is a beautiful sight to behold when historically hostile communities set aside their differences to conserve natural resources, peacefully coexist, develop economically, and work together to fight a common adversary—climate change. This is a reality in the NRT landscape, thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our peace ambassadors, who tirelessly advocate for peace while collaborating with numerous stakeholders to bring healing to communities. Their phenomenal efforts are bolstered by impactful peace programs such as the USAID-funded People-to-People (P2P) Program, which promotes peaceful conflict resolution.

Because peace prevails in many parts of our area of operation, our member conservancies can carry on with their conservation activities, and conservancies remain an effective channel for driving community economic development. Follow along to learn more about the conservation wins that NRT and the community conservancies achieved in September.

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### NRT Marks **International Day of Peace**, Celebrates **12 Years of Peace in Nakuprat-Gotu**

Every year, the International Day of Peace is observed around the world as a day of nonviolence and ceasefire.

This year, NRT joined Nakuprat-Gotu Community Conservancy in Isiolo County in commemorating Peace Day, and celebrating 12 years of the communities' peaceful coexist-





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The peaceful coexistence of Nakuprat-Gotu's communities has led to the implementation of the Carbon Project's activities, construction of a school, the emergence of employment opportunities, and equal sharing of resources despite the challenges posed by climate change. This is a major win because the Borana and Turkana, who previously could not agree, are now peacefully sharing the few resources available to them.

Josephine Ekiru  
The NRT Peace Coordinator

ence, at a spectacular event held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, whose theme was 'Conservation for Peace'.

Over 200 people gathered for the celebrations which brought together in song and dance, the Somali, Borana and Turkana—three communities that had previously lived in hostility toward one another. Also in attendance were NRT's partners, including representatives from USAID, the European Union, the Embassy of Sweden, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, and The Nature Conservancy.

For Nakuprat-Gotu's Borana, Turkana and Somali communities, 12 years of peaceful coexistence is a significant milestone achieved against the backdrop of ethnic violence and insecurity that has plagued Northern Kenya for years, impeding the com-





munities' progress and upending people's lives. The already dire situation was exacerbated by a burgeoning population competing for diminishing resources. Territorial conflict and stock theft ensued, endangering all caught in the crossfire, including wildlife, and resulting in unbearable loss of human life and livestock.

The creation of Nakuprat-Gotu Conservancy was a timely non-violent solution to the tribal conflict, as the previously warring communities came together to form the Conservancy, bringing peace to this violent-prone area. The Conservancy's existence has reduced human-wildlife conflict and led to the development of well-coordinated grazing and settlement patterns. It has also improved security in the region, making the environment conducive for business, therefore creating job opportunities for locals.

The NRT Peace Coordinator, and winner of the 2021 U.S. Institute of Peace Award, Josephine Ekiru has been an advocate for peace among Nakuprat-Gotu's communities. In her remarks at the Peace Day event, she underscored the importance of conserving natural resources in order to maintain the peace.



Adan Ndege, the NRT Chairman for the East Region and Chair of Garba Tulla Conservancy, encouraged the community members to frequently check on their neighbors and shun tribalism and divisive traditions. He added, "When we live in harmony as a community, even wildlife experience peace."

NRT East's Regional Director, Mohammed Shibia, reiterated NRT would continue supporting the communities in peacebuilding. The area Officer Commanding Station (OCS) also encouraged community members to report any criminal activity to the police for action.

The peace witnessed at Nakuprat-Gotu for the last 12 years is a testament to the fact that community conservancies are a springboard for peacebuilding and offer flexibility in community engagement.

The community conservancy model and the relationship conservancies have with NRT present a neutral platform for bringing people together for discourse—providing an alternative to violence as a means of resolving disputes.



## NRT Hosts a Delegation from the US Congress

It was an honour to host four congressmen and congresswomen from the United States House Committee on Natural Resources as they visited NRT to review the work we are doing, learn from our best practices in conservation and community development, and better understand the challenges and opportunities facing pastoralist communities.

The visitors included Chairman Raúl Grijalva (D-Arizona), Edward Case (D-Hawaii), Jenniffer González-Colón (R-Puerto Rico), and Rashida Tlaib (D-Michigan). The delegation visited a biogas site in Isiolo as well as Kalama Conservancy, where they interacted with hundreds of community members and learned about various projects.

Finally, they conducted a tour of the Joint Operations Communications Centre at NRT headquarters and met with BeadWORKS staff to learn more about enterprise opportunities for women in northern Kenya.





## NRT Undertakes the 2022 Wildlife Ranger Challenge



Rangers are real-life heroes, working round the clock to protect and care for wildlife. In their multifaceted role, they also serve as teachers, community supporters, conservationists, researchers, leaders, and so much more!

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, a team of NRT rangers (Josphat, Saitoti, Abdullahi, and Emmanuel) joined 94 ranger teams from 16 African countries in gearing up for the 2022 Wildlife Ranger Challenge and running a 21-kilometer half marathon to raise much-needed funds to support their front-line conservation work.



Carrying 22-kilogram backpacks and braving northern Kenya's sweltering heat and rugged terrain, the four rangers, drawn from NRT's Mobile Unit, covered the 21-kilometer circuit within Lewa Conservancy in an impressive time of 02:31:39.

The half marathon was preceded by a series of mental and physical challenges, including a sit-ups and pushups challenge, in which participants





# 02:31:39

The time it took the team to run 21 kilometers with 22-kilogram backpacks

did as many perfect push-ups and sit-ups as they could in two minutes, and a rangers quiz that tested the rangers' knowledge about wildlife and conservation.

Organized by Tusk, the annual Wildlife Ranger Challenge seeks to highlight the challenges rangers face and generate support for the thousands of heroes and heroines who protect Africa's iconic wildlife and ecosystems.



## NRT Council of Elders Holds 2<sup>nd</sup> Bi-Annual Meeting

Good governance is the fuel that drives resilience, community development, and growth in conservancies.

Each NRT member community conservancy is governed by a community-elected Board whose members ensure each community group's voice is heard in the conservancy's governance. Each conservancy's Board is led by a Chairperson who represents the Conservancy on the Council of Elders—NRT's primary governing body and highest decision-making body.

All the Chairpersons and 10 regional Women Representatives of NRT member conservancies convened for the second bi-annual Council of Elders' (CoEs) meeting to deliberate on the 2022 Annual Operations Report and Work Plan, the development of the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guidelines, NRT's development and adoption of a Human Rights and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy, the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project, conservancy audits, NRT Trading updates, and the Due Diligence Report, which exonerated NRT from the grave allegations made against it by the Oakland Institute, in the "Stealth Game" Report.

Other key stakeholders who attended the meeting included County Government officials and representatives from the National Police Service, the Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Wildlife



Conservancies Association (KWCA), and the Water Sector Trust Fund (WaterFund).

During the meeting, the Council revealed that five new community conservancies had recently applied for NRT membership and were awaiting its consideration and approval. They are Dabel Community Conservancy (Marsabit), Chachabole Community Conservancy (Mandera), Malkahalaku Community Conservancy (Tana River), Kontomas Community Conservancy (Mandera), and Kamuthe Wildlife Conservancy (Garissa).

A delegation from Morungole Community Conservancy, the first community conservancy from Uganda to obtain NRT membership, made their maiden in-person attendance at the forum, led by the Conservancy's Board Chairperson, Jacob Luchul.

Following the Council's unanimous suspension of the Namunyak Wildlife Conservation Trust during its first bi-annual meeting in March due to serious governance, financial accountability, and transparency issues, Kalepo and Ngilai Central—two of Namunyak's constituent units, separately wrote letters of appeal to the Council, requesting for reconsideration, the lifting of their suspension and permission to rejoin NRT.

They both appreciated the governance concerns raised by NRT and distanced themselves from the other two units, which have thus far been unable to successfully resolve the issues raised.

The Council unanimously agreed to begin the process of reinstating the two units.



## Film Featuring Ruko Conservancy, NRT, Premieres on Nat Geo WILD

Nine rare giraffe species find themselves suddenly stranded on a lake island in Kenya. If they are not rescued, they will die.



The only solution is far-fetched: build a modern-day ark, called The Giraft, convince the skittish animals to get on board, and sail them to the mainland before they starve. Can a team of local leaders, Kenyan vets, and conservationists pull it off?

Directed and produced by Tyler Schiffman, the film ‘Saving Giraffes: The Long Journey Home’ tells the incredible story of how the Ruko community, two tribes previously at war, joined forces to save these nine endangered Rothschild’s giraffes from a sinking island in

Lake Baringo in a riveting rescue mission carried out by Ruko Community Conservancy, with the support of NRT, Save Giraffes Now, the Kenya Wildlife Service and US-AID.



This film is an account of a dramatic heart-pounding rescue and the dedicated people who against the challenge of climate change and armed conflict, fight for life-saving conservation in their community.

If you missed the premiere on September 21, stream the film, out now on the National Geographic Wild Channel and Disney Plus.

‘Saving Giraffes: The Long Journey Home’ has also just been accepted into the Wildscreen Network in the UK!

## NRT Hosts **USAID PREG Program Development Partners**

During a recent inter-partner project showcase, development partners from USAID’s Partnership and Resilience for Economic Growth (PREG) Program from Samburu and Isiolo counties toured some of NRT’s project sites, including the Kalama Resource Centre, Clean Energy Project, BeadWORKS, and Ujuzi Manyattani.



The visit was led by Mr. David Gosney, the new USAID Mission Director.

The PREG Program brings together multiple USAID programs and implementing partners to coordinate resilience and economic growth activities with county governments and Kenya’s drought agency, the National Drought and Management Authority (NDMA). It builds on community-identified strengths and priorities while drawing on the remarkable survival abilities of local populations.



## Joy and Celebration as 52 NRT Coast Women Graduate from LAMP

It was a joyous time of celebration at NRT Coast as 52 women leaders from Pate, Kiunga, Awer, and Lower Tana Delta Community Conservancies and gender mainstreaming champions from all 7 NRT Coast conservancies graduated from NRT’s bespoke Leadership and Management Program (LAMP) training at a ceremony graced by the Lamu County Governor, H.E. Issa Abdalla Timamy.

This graduation marked the completion of the second phase of LAMP, which ran for four months from June to September 2022, and increased the number of women LAMP graduates by 100%, bringing the total number of graduates to 104, up from 52 in the first phase of training.

Other stakeholders who attended the event included the Office of the Women Representative, four Members of the County Assembly,



We are proud to support the activities that NRT is coordinating at the Coast such as the mangrove restoration, micro-finance program, fish to market, and conservation awareness, among others. You are making news and setting standards for other women across the world.

George Maina  
Africa Fisheries Strategy Manager,  
The Nature Conservancy

conservancy leaders and representatives from Lamu Women Alliance, Maendeleo ya Wanawake, the Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, and Lamu Youth Assembly.

This LAMP training was customized for women from fisher communities and aimed at strengthening their participation in natural resource management for community development. The Program was facilitated by NRT, with the support of The Nature Conservancy, USAID, and the Lamu, Tana River, and Garissa County Governments.

LAMP has reduced gender inequality and empowered local women to effectively lead and manage their conservancies, women groups, fisheries, and beach management units among others, as evidenced by their increased participation in community development and conservation programs including mangrove restoration, microfinance, and plastic and waste management.



In his congratulatory speech to the women, the Lamu Governor stated, “The County Government will continue to partner with and support NRT’s and The Nature Conservancy’s conservation and community development efforts.” As the recently elected Chair of the Blue Economy in the Council of Governors, the Governor added he would engage numerous partners to scale conservation efforts and ensure resources are used sustainably. He further invited the LAMP graduates to set up a tent at the Lamu Cultural Festival to create awareness of their conservation and community development activities.



[Click this link](#) to watch a short video highlight of the graduation ceremony.

## SIDA Team Visits NRT

Mid-September, NRT had the honor of hosting a delegation from the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi led by the new SIDA Head of Cooperation, Annika Otterstedt.

The team visited to deepen their understanding of NRT and NRT’s programs and later toured project sites in Ngare Ndare and Kalamia Conservancies supported by the Government of Sweden through the Integrated Management of Natural Resources for Resilience in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (IMARA) Program.

The IMARA Program, implemented by NRT and a consortium of partners including World Vision Kenya, Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association, Saferworld, and the Stockholm Environment Institute, seeks to revitalize and preserve rangeland assets for the benefit of current and future generations through diversified livelihoods and improved natural resource management and use in Kenya’s Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs).

NRT’s Program outcomes involve strengthening governance systems, climate change adaptation, securing livelihoods, and strengthening inclusive market systems that support natural resources management and restore social-ecological landscapes for enhanced biodiversity and ecosystem services.





## NRT and Lewa Wildlife Conservancy Commemorate World Rhino Day

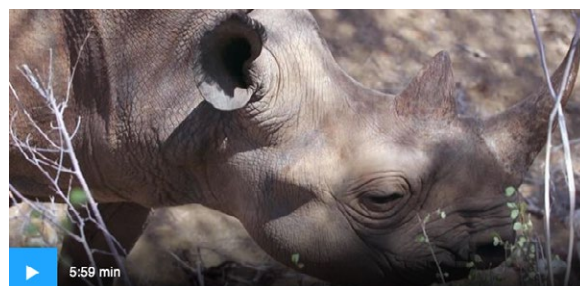
Rhinos are magnificent, and World Rhino Day presents the perfect opportunity to celebrate them.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, NRT, in collaboration with Lewa Wildlife Conservancy held a walk to celebrate World Rhino Day. The walk symbolized and reiterated Lewa's steadfast commitment to journey with its rhino population and ensure they thrive.

Lewa's historical efforts to safeguard rhinos and provide a secure place for them to breed freely, enabled the Conservancy to restock other wildlife sanctuaries across the country. Thanks to their efforts, the once decimated Kenyan rhino population has rebounded. The number of Rhinos in the Lewa landscape

is now equal to the total number that existed in the county in 1990.

Today, multiple NRT member conservancies host the endangered rhino, with the Sera Conservancy— the only community-run rhino sanctuary in Africa, hosting 20 animals. Deutsche Welle, the German news outlet, recently [filmed a story](#) on Sera's work to preserve this amazing species.



## NRT Forges New Partnership with the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation

September marked the beginning of a new partnership with the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), that will see community conservancies in the AMAYA Triangle (Laikipia, Baringo, Samburu, and Isiolo) receive support for integrated and sustainable biodiversity protection.

In line with NRT's vision, this partnership seeks to address the key factors undermining the resilience of the communities in these geographical locations and aims to improve governance, peace and security, nature-based livelihoods, employment and business opportunities, and natural resources management.

It was a great honor to host the AICS Coordinator for Agriculture and Rural Development, Francesco Palumbo, as he visited





NRT headquarters and Kalama Conservancy to deepen his knowledge of NRT's key projects and focus areas.

AICS promotes sustainable development that favors eradication of poverty, reduction of inequality, protection of civil rights, gender equality, liberal democracy, the establishment of the rule of law, prevention of conflict, and support for peace processes.

## NRT Photographer Wins **USAID Photography Contest**

A photograph taken in 2021 by NRT Photographer Paul Wambugu won the top award in USAID's Locally Led Development Initiatives 2022 Photo Contest. The photo highlights NRT Coast's Octopus Project which is generating sustainable income for dozens of fisherwomen on Pate Island.

The winning photograph was described by USAID as capturing, "so much emotion, striking composition, and an interesting story of locally-led development that we're excited to share."





## Lewa Conservancy Host **Educational Tour** for Students from NRT Member Conservancies

Students from Bisan Biliqo Primary School had a great time learning as they were taken on an insightful two-day tour of Lewa Conservancy, expanding their knowledge of conservation and environmental management.

The School is one of several from NRT member community conservancies visiting Lewa, thanks to the support of the NRT East office and the good working relationship between the NRT Education Program and the Lewa Education Program.



## Shaping the Future of Conservation: **NRT and Marsabit County Hold Talks**

NRT Trading's CEO, Vishal Shah, and the Ministry of East African Community Principal Secretary, Dr. Kevit Desai met with the Marsabit County Commissioner, County Secretary, and officials from the Marsabit Chamber of Commerce to deliberate on the expansion of potential opportunities for impactful businesses such as tourism, boosting community conservancy-owned enterprises.



The discussions also centered on generating green energy value propositions through the power of collaborative partnerships between the private sector, government, and development stakeholders, as well as the need for accelerated legislation and policy at the county assembly and national levels.

## NRT Commemorates **International Coastal Cleanup Day**

The majority of life on earth is aquatic, and every International Coastal Cleanup Day is a reminder to keep nature pure and our oceans clean.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2022, NRT Coast joined the Kiunga Community Wildlife Association (KICOWA) and the rest of the world in marking International Coastal

The celebrations were held in Mkokoni in Lamu in an event graced by Dr. Winnie Kiiru, the Chairperson of the Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI) and attended by local women, youth, and beach management units' representatives, among others.

KICOWA spearheaded the fight for trash-free seas and coastlines and conducted a beach cleanup exercise as part of the celebration, with the support of NRT, The Nature Conservancy, USAID, Kiwayu Safaris, WRTI, World Wide Fund (Kenya), and Lamu County, collecting 2.3 tons of ocean waste plastic from the beaches around Mkokoni Village, where sea turtles nest.



# 2.3 Tons

of plastic waste collected





## NRT Coast Conducts Coral Reef Monitoring Survey

All over the world, coral reefs have earned the moniker “rainforests of the sea” due to the richness of life they contain. The importance is undisputable as they support an estimated 25% of all marine species.

NRT Coast’s, Pate Marine Community Conservancy launched the Artificial Coral Reef Restoration Project with the goal of restoring at least 0.5 hectares of reef within Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs), enhancing fisheries, and safeguarding the habitats of critical marine species.

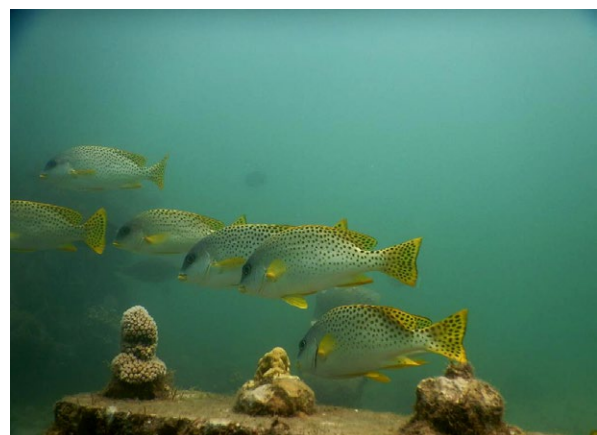


The Conservancy then identified and mapped the degraded reef areas, and last year, its community reef restoration experts constructed the artificial structures and deployed them in 3 sites within LMMAs. The deployed artificial structures included 16 units of artificial blocks, 16 units of cylindrical structures for lobsters, 12 nursery tables, and 3 nurseries.

To ensure the corals’ longevity, a monitoring plan was developed, and its implementation by Pate’s reef rangers began last year.

This year, the rangers have conducted multiple additional monitoring surveys in both Pate Marine and Kiunga Community Conservancies. The most recent survey was conducted this September at the Chipopo no-take zone, where the artificial reefs were assessed for growth and survival.

During the monitoring surveys, the fish, benthic, and invertebrates found along the reefs are also assessed, and data on them is collected.



## Songa Conservancy Convenes **Special Community Meeting**

Inclusive consultation is the bedrock and foundation of the community conservancy model. Listening to the community is a top priority for NRT and NRT member conservancies, and community members' voices are actively sought in discussions pertinent to the conservancies' development as their perspectives shape the direction of each community conservancy.

The Songa Community Conservancy Board recently held a special meeting to consult with the community on conservancy governance, Conservancy Livelihood Funds (CLF), security, peacebuilding, conservancy headquarters and rangers' wildlife patrols, human-elephant conflict, and the Carbon Project, among other issues.

NRT's Chief of Conservation and Development, Ian Craig, attended the community-led meeting and engaged with community members as they sought effective solutions.

The Conservancy Board expressed gratitude for the ongoing support provided by NRT through various programs, including the Water, Ujuzi Manyattani, and Ufugaji Bora Programs.



### **Newsbytes** from the Conservancies

#### REGIONAL NEWS

##### **Marsabit**

Conservancy Managers and key staff members held a two-day training on QuickBooks, digitization of the NRT Education program, and ICT solutions.

##### **Coast**

NRT Coast sponsored the review of the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2023-2027 with the County Government of Lamu, and other key partners.



## Isiolo

Women in Isiolo conservancies participated in the Leadership and Management Program (LAMP) module 4 training aimed at improving leadership, governance, and their involvement in Conservation.

## Samburu

A Samburu County Tourism Strategic Plan Validation workshop was conducted with support from the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).

The Women Leadership and Management Program (LAMP) training was completed.

## West Pokot

All the Conservancies held Board meetings and shared their respective updates, achievements, and challenges.

## Baringo

Biogas digester units were installed in Ruko by NRT's Clean Energy Team to reduce the pressure on shrinking forest habitats caused by charcoal and firewood harvesting.

## Mt. Kenya

The regional leadership met the Laikipia Governor, Joshua Irungu, for a brief on NRT's and Community Conservancies' work. The Governor promised to support conservation in the region.

The Regional office was moved from Laikipia Wildlife Forum to Muthaiga.

## Nairobi

NRT CEO, Tom Lalampaa, attended the Kenya International Conference on Biodiversity, Land Use, and Climate Change. The Conference sought to discuss a national framework for conserving Kenya's biodiversity, taking into account land use, livelihoods, and climate change issues.

## CONSERVANCY UPDATES



**Nkoteiya:** 2 women, 11 youth and 15 elders successfully underwent a Grazing Committee training aimed at building their capacity on grazing management.



**Pate:** Hosted a visit by The Nature Conservancy to explore opportunities for agriculture-based projects.



**Ltungai:** A Conservancy Board meeting was held, as well as a peace meeting, which led to the return of stolen livestock.



**Nanapisho & Nannapa:** 40 members attended a Village Based Grazing Committee training and learnt about grazing management.



**Songa:** 30 herders enrolled in the Local Works program, were issued with digital phones, solar kits, and airtime, to establish a communication link with herders for data collection on diseases, livestock markets information and rangelands' condition.



### Jaldesa:

- NRT Trading's Livestock Team rolled out a practical demonstration on feeding and deworming.
- 30 herders benefited from livestock feeds and medical training.
- 27 households benefited from biogas system installations.



**Jaldesa and Shurr:** Multiple peace meetings were held to boost coexistence among communities.



**Meibae, Westgate, Kalama:** A Conservancy Finances Training was held to improve accountability and prudent use of finances by the respective conservancies.



**Melako:** Drought contingency planning was undertaken with the National Drought and Management Authority (NDMA) in order to respond effectively to drought.

### Lower Tana:



- A Leadership and Management Program (LAMP) Training for 5 Mangrove Community Forest Associations was held to improve mangrove monitoring and restoration.
- Planning for mapping of degraded areas and ecological assessment was completed.
- A training on ecological mangrove restoration was completed paving way for restoration.



### Ruko:

- Another baby giraffe was born, bringing the number of the endangered Rothschild's giraffes in the Ruko Sanctuary to 13.
- The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) approved the translocation of other wildlife species to Ruko.

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September was filled with numerous conservation wins that would have been impossible to achieve in the absence of peace. A harmonious environment is vital for conservation activities and community development.

We are grateful for all our donors and partners, whose continuous support enables us to continue transforming lives in northern and coastal Kenya, build peace and conserve the natural environment.



## 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.

