

THE NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST
STRATEGIC PLAN

**2018-
2022**







PART A: IMPACT SO FAR

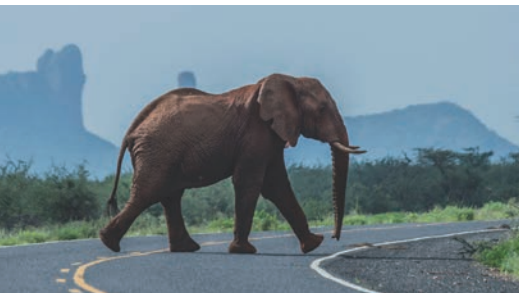
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PART A

IMPACT SO FAR



A1. GROWTH, IMPACTS AND LESSONS

The first northern Kenyan community conservancies were established in Il Ngwesi and Namunyak in 1995. Another seven were established over the next few years (Lekurruki, Melako, Ngare Ndare, Sera, Naibunga, Kalama and Westgate), prompting the birth of the Northern Rangelands Trust in 2004 to support this growing conservancy movement. Since then, growth has been steady, impact has been spreading, donor backing has increased, and many lessons have been learned. The new Strategic Plan builds on all of this progress and learning.

Of the 64 indicators set out in the 2012 -2017 Strategic Plan, 70% were substantially achieved

Overall the last NRT 5-year Strategic Plan (2012 – 2017) was delivered successfully. On a simple “green-amber-red” scoring of the 64 indicators set out in that plan, 70% were substantially achieved (45 of 64 indicators), 25% were only partially achieved¹, and only 5% (targets on 3 out of 64 indicators) made little progress².

Growth of the community conservancy movement has been significant during the plan period, from 18 to 31 member conservancies over five years. The **significant social, economic and conservation impacts of NRT conservancies** have been set out in the annual NRT State of Conservancies Reports (2014-2017), and summarised in Figure 2.

Our membership has grown from 18 conservancies in 2012 to 35 in 2018, with significant social, economic and conservation impacts



1. Effectiveness of AGMs, transparency of benefit sharing, conservancies raising their own funds, systematic water resource management, enforcement of grazing by-laws, development of new enterprises, and levies from handicrafts.
2. Development of conservancy partnerships in health, establishing a livestock insurance scheme, setting up a conservation trust fund

Northern Rangelands Trust Community Conservancies 2018

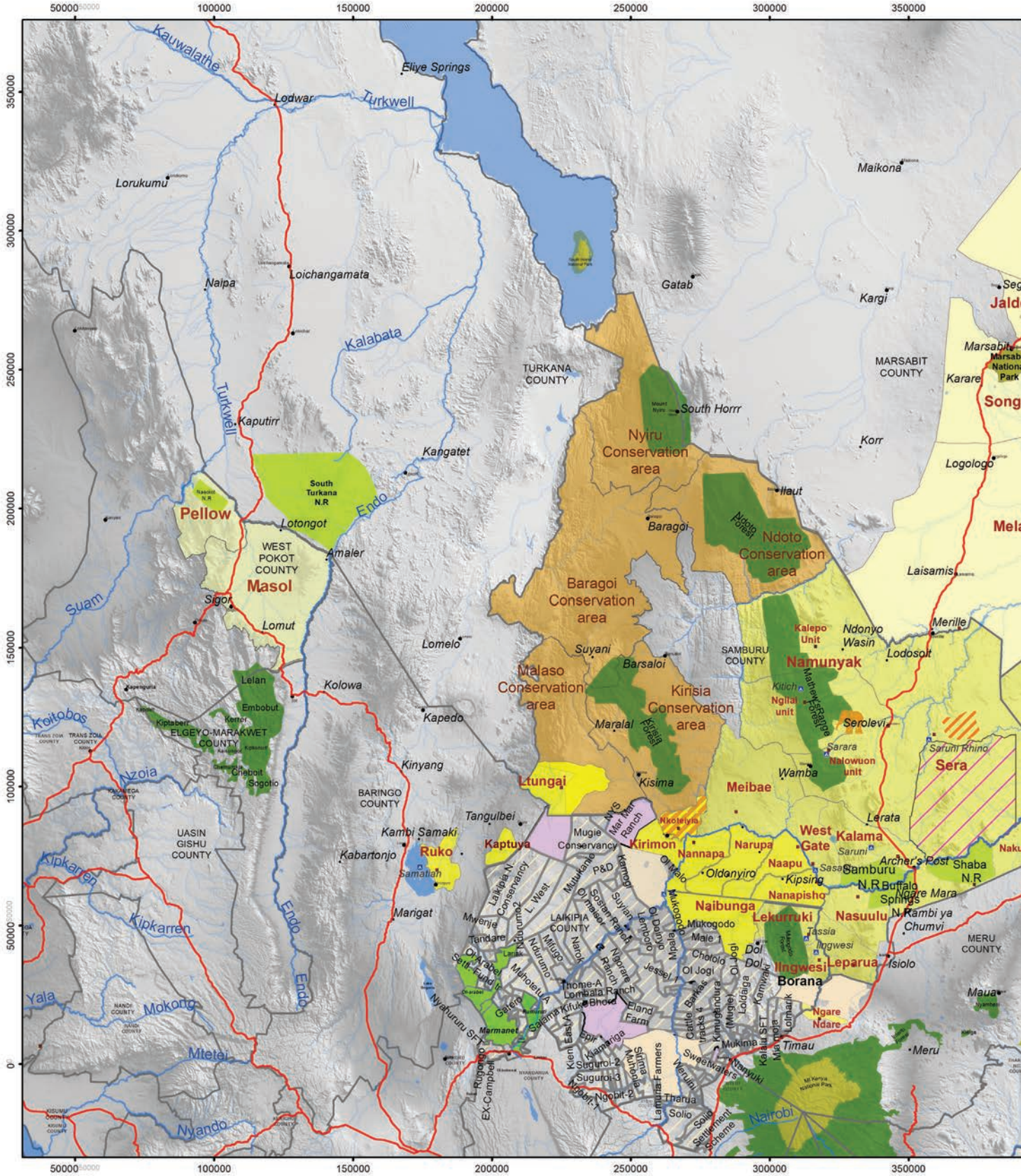


Figure 1: Map of NRT Member Conservancies

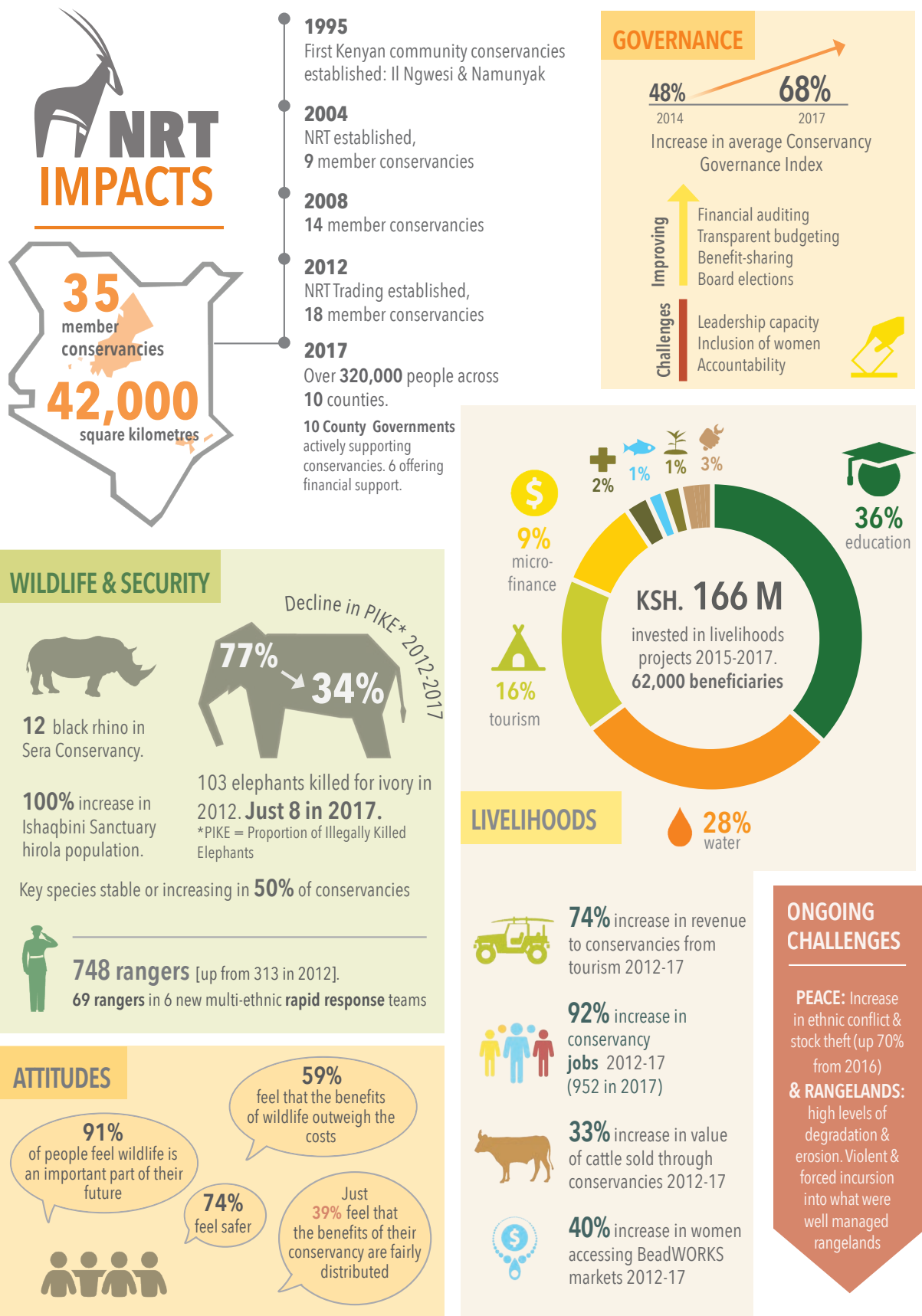


Figure 2: NRT Impacts

Many **lessons have been learnt** from our impact measurements and experiences, analysed below, and are reflected in the new plan.



Governance

- The impacts of NRT and community conservancies are a significant **endorsement of the approach by communities of all ethnicities** across the northern Kenya landscape. The approach has also brought wide political buy-in (except so far in Turkana), with 10 county governments actively supporting community conservancies, and at least 6 offering financial support or starting their own-funded conservancies.
- This success comes with the **challenge for NRT** of adequately supporting the new member conservancies, and the risk of spreading the capacity of the umbrella organisation too thin.
- While **governance has improved**, Community Conservancies still face challenges of leadership capability, communications and awareness amongst the wider community. Conservancies need to build on the inclusion of women and youth in decision-making structures – although there are pockets of excellence and great role models in some conservancy chairwomen. We will also continue to improve the measurement of governance to include measures of awareness, attitudes and social impacts from our Social-CoMMS surveys (Community Monitoring and Management System).



Peace and Security

- A significant factor in the **dramatic security improvements**, especially for wildlife, has been the addition of multi-ethnic, mobile security teams that cover clusters of conservancies. These have provided a major boost to conservancy-specific rangers, and shown positive results.
- **Peace has been difficult to secure.** The frequency of ethnically motivated conflicts and deaths, livestock raids, and conflicts over grass and water are all variable from year to year, as they are driven by unpredictable drought and competition for dwindling grazing resources. Ethnic politics heightens tensions at times of elections. Livestock thefts increased by 70% in 2017 from the previous year, due to the drought and political tensions.
- While these cultural, political and resource-conflict challenges remain, the conservancies are putting in place the **building blocks of peace**, including teams of elders trained as peace ambassadors, rapid reaction peace meetings, youth forums, NRT-related radio programmes on building peace, multi-ethnic sports events that build trust and understanding. And the stronger, multi-ethnic, mobile security teams are able to respond rapidly to livestock raids and recover stolen stock (1,349 head were recovered in 2017) which is helping break cycles of retaliation. It is widely acknowledged that without NRT and the Community Conservancies, conflict would be significantly worse.



Livelihoods and Business

- The **investments in livelihoods** are very widely welcomed by conservancy members, are focussed on some of the priority needs and underlying drivers of poverty in the communities, and have significant conservation leverage. This greatly strengthens the community conservancy model, reinforcing the positive links between working for peace and security, better livelihoods and good conservation practices.
- The **economic impact and conservation leverage of eco-tourism** is significant, generating higher levels of income for conservancies and communities than any other investments. However, tourism development is heavily skewed to a few conservancies, and the levels of understanding of the tourism industry are low and levels of acceptance variable in communities. Successful eco-tourism is highly linked to security.
- The establishment of **NRT Trading Ltd.** to incubate and run commercial businesses and provide financial services has significantly benefitted households and conservancies. This is starting to have real impact, in a tough business environment with a "hand-out" culture to break. All these livelihood and business investments are improving lives, and together with empowering self-governance, are changing attitudes to conflict, conservation, land and natural resource management.



Natural Resources and Conservation

- **Rangelands management remains the toughest challenge**, with high levels of range degradation, soil erosion and loss of soil carbon. Results of conservancy-level planned grazing and rehabilitation have had good localized success over the past 5 years, and have established proof-of-concept, but have not been able to withstand the pressures of landscape-level livestock movements, often led by armed herders, in search of very patchy grazing across the degraded rangelands, especially during the severe 2016-2017 drought.
- There is **limited understanding of the drivers of this degradation** by most pastoralists, and little incentive to change whilst guns are so prevalent or to explore what the solutions look like. There is a pervasive "tragedy of the commons": conservancies have done very little settlement planning, awareness raising or enforcement, as part of dry season grazing management. There is a clash between the cultural and traditional aspects of nomadic grazing systems and the more closed-boundary systems that conservancies promote to manage rangelands. And armed herders disrespect conservancies' core conservation areas, forcibly opting to graze where and when they can, lest someone else takes the grass.
- There are **major external forces** which are largely beyond NRT's control, including population growth, the number of illegal guns, and climate change. The population of sheep and goats – more drought resistant but more destructive feeders – increases every year, along with the human population, often expanding in unplanned settlements.



Attitudes

- **Wildlife populations have largely stabilised**, some key species numbers have increased, and populations of endangered species are now more secure. This has been the result of anti-poaching work, conservation awareness, mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, wildlife monitoring and endangered species recovery programmes. KWS surveys show that elephant and reticulated giraffe populations have increased, and NRT Wildlife-CoMMS data show that eland, oryx, giraffe and gerenuk are doing well in most conservancies where they occur, and cheetah, lion and wild dogs are increasing in several conservancies – although at low densities. Of concern, five conservancies are however showing significant declines in most species that are being monitored;
- **Marine conservation has started to make real progress** along the north Coast, using the community conservancy model. Communities in Kiunga and Pate have set up protected areas for fish recovery, are monitoring fish stocks, have conducted beach clean-ups of ocean plastics, have started marine ranger patrols to restrict turtle poaching and illegal mangrove cutting, and are exploring opportunities for community-based and sustainable commercial fisheries.
- Social surveys of the attitudes of communities to their conservancy and its work, undertaken across 16 conservancies, reveal the depth of the successes of NRT to date (see Figure 2). There are, by significant majorities, **positive attitudes to wildlife, security, employment, livelihood benefits and conservancy businesses**. People feel wildlife is an important part of their future despite experiencing competition with wildlife for grazing and water, and predation of their livestock. Top conservancy benefits are frequently given as improved security, support for transport, and school bursaries. Many women indicate how the BeadWORKS business has transformed their lives.
- Of concern is that only a minority feel that the benefits of their conservancy are fairly distributed, a focus for the future in building greater transparency and accountability in conservancy leadership;
- A great majority participate in their conservancy's grazing plan if there is one, or a traditional grazing plan (88%) – suggesting a willingness to address rangeland management, but which in practice is overwhelmed by greater forces;
- A significant **9% of all households have at least one family member employed by the conservancy**, while 15% have benefitted from casual employment.

Conclusion

The message is clear: that NRT community conservancies are having a significant impact on conservation and livelihoods, and are widely popular, but there remain immense challenges in building lasting peace and securing a productive and sustainable future for the rangelands.

Community conservancies are having a significant impact on conservation and livelihoods, but there remain immense challenges in building sustainable peace and rangelands management.

What has changed in the 2012-2017 period is that Conservancies now operate at much bigger scale, devolved government has arrived, government policy has evolved (notably the Community Land Act 2016, and the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013), the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association has been established and put Community Conservancies on the national stage, and NRT has learnt a lot about what works and doesn't work at the operational level, and what shifts in emphasis are needed.



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A2. CONSULTATIONS ON NRT'S FUTURE

To build on these changes, in 2017 we undertook extensive consultations on the new Strategic Plan, with conservancy chairpersons, in focus group discussions with conservancy elders, women, youth, rangers and others, in key informant interviews with eminent persons having strong roots in pastoral communities, with NRT staff, and with the NRT Council of Elders. We also learned from the conclusions of the USAID External Evaluation of NRT (2007-2015), the independent NRT Gender Assessment, and the IMPACT study on NRT conservancies. Finally, we have drawn on NRT's internal monitoring systems including social surveys and wildlife monitoring (Social-CoMMS and Wildlife-CoMMS).

These consultations and independent studies indicate that NRT community conservancies are a powerful force for conservation and development in northern Kenya, with significant positive impact on people's lives and on wildlife conservation. They also recommend a number of changes, which this new Strategic Plan directly addresses:

- **Build more leadership and management capacity** in Conservancy boards, women, young men, Conservancy managers and rangers
- **Focus on inclusion** of women and youth in the affairs of each Conservancy, and **accountability** of boards and managers to their communities, for their actions and decisions
- **Improve communications and awareness**, with a major focus on communities within each Conservancy, but also on policy-makers and the wider public
- **Scale up and improve the effectiveness of the Conservancy Livelihoods Fund (CLF) and other livelihood investments** to extend their already significant impact
- **Invest in family planning** to tackle the massive challenges of population, health and environment
- **Better integrate peace and security**, with a more comprehensive approach to stabilisation, including identifying, preventing, resolving and transforming conflict



- **Tackle increasing human-wildlife conflict** as wildlife recovers and wildlife security improves, to reduce a potential backlash in conflict hotspots
- **Improve the governance of rangelands** as the central challenge for pastoralism in the north and develop a more comprehensive strategy for the future of rangelands, including raised awareness of the problem, recovery of traditional knowledge and authority, and increased county government engagement
- **Extend NRT's reach** and more clearly distinguish its separate roles as running businesses (such as livestock and beads), supporting Conservancy businesses (such as tourism), and offering business extension services (such as savings and credit, training and household business incubation)
- **Increase engagement with county government** with a clear ambition for policy, legal and financial support to Conservancies
- **Invest more in building sustainability** for both NRT and Conservancies, including Conservancy-specific solutions for financing, business, fund-raising and graduation from NRT financial support

NRT community conservancies are a powerful force for conservation and development in northern Kenya. To realise their full potential, we must continue to build leadership and governance capacity, scale up livelihoods investments, tackle conflict in all forms, develop businesses and partnerships.

A3. NRT'S CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There are a number of positive national developments which present opportunities for NRT to influence policy and add significant value to wider Kenyan stability and progress – set out in Figure 3. NRT is already making a major impact consistent with these policies, laws, institutions and programmes, and will communicate this more clearly, nurture political support more widely, and seek financial, policy and legal support more effectively for our member community conservancies.

KENYA'S CONSTITUTION

Chapter 5, Article 61 (1) ensures:

- Sustainable exploitation, utilisation, management and **conservation of the environment** and natural resources
- **Equitable sharing** of the accruing benefits
- Protecting and enhancing intellectual property and **indigenous knowledge**, biodiversity and the genetic resources of communities
- **Public participation** in the management, protection and conservation of the environment
- Protecting genetic resources and **biological diversity**.
- Recognising **challenges** of climate change, population growth, property rights, markets, knowledge, technology and infrastructure.

VISION 2030

Promotes a vision of holistic and sustainable management of land and natural resources across Arid and Semi-arid Lands, with specific focus on:

- **Peace and security:** recognising the role of traditional institutions in dispute resolution
- **Human development & employment:** increasing institutional capacity and funding for arid lands, enhancing the direct benefits to communities from natural resources
- **Community land laws and regulation:** respecting the authority of customary systems of natural resource management, water access, dry season grazing
- **Natural resource management :** integrating traditional systems of natural resource management, intensifying environmental conservation efforts for water and rangelands
- **Drought resilience:** strengthening environmental planning and management

COMMUNITY LAND ACT

- recognition, protection and registration of community land rights
- management and administration of community land
- role of county governments in relation to unregistered community land

KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE

- Community conservancies have a significant role in new wildlife strategy.
- Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) is a strong national lobbying agency, and all NRT conservancies are members

OTHER DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

- Poverty alleviation and social protection
- Women's empowerment
- Green economy: green jobs, technologies, rangelands rehabilitation, conservation, eco-tourism
- Curbing illegal wildlife trade
- Family planning and reproductive health
- National Cohesion and Integration

ENDING DROUGHT EMERGENCY

- Adaptation to climate change and more frequent droughts
- Building resilience of people and ecosystems
- Investments in sustainable development, including peace & security, livelihood adaptations, managed water, productive rangelands

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

- Newly elected 2017-2022
- Fresh mandates and growing support for conservancies
- Priority sectors in County Integrated Development Plans include livestock, rangelands, water, tourism, wildlife and drought
- Conservancies can be major local institutions for delivery of county services and investments

NRT
RELEVANCE OF NRT TO WIDER
KENYAN DEVELOPMENT

Figure 3: Relevance of NRT to Wider Kenyan Development



Complex challenges - like those facing communities and ecosystems in the arid and semi-arid lands of northern Kenya - need **need holistic, integrated solutions**. NRT's **model of community conservation** puts local people at the forefront of development and conservation, **empowering communities to transform their lives, secure peace, and conserve natural resources**.



Figure 4: NRT Theory of Change: why we need NRT



A4. THEORY OF CHANGE

Challenges

Pastoralist and farming communities in the arid and semi-arid lands of Northern Kenya face many **inter-linked challenges**. These include clusters of problems around insecurity, poverty, social exclusion, severe degradation of natural resources, human and livestock population growth, and climate change – elaborated in Figure 4. Without an innovative approach, increasing impacts of climate change, the tide of growing human and livestock populations, and the increasing degradation of overused grasslands, forests and fisheries - and the increasing competition and conflict this produces - would continue to drive poverty, conflict, lack of investment, environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity. In the longer term, this would produce the conditions for more violent ethnic division, extremism and societal decay, and potentially become a threat to national development.

NRT Solution

NRT's experience is that these complex challenges require a holistic, multi-sectoral, community-led response, with strong support from government and development agencies, and has developed a model of community conservation that has proven extraordinarily robust, empowering and impactful. The experience of the community conservancy movement to date is that a number of **key things need to change**. These changes represent NRT's Theory of Change, and are set out in the four objectives of the NRT Strategic Plan (2018-2022). The transformations required are:

GOVERNANCE

- Well-governed, **community-led institutions** that can represent the voice of communities in building peace, resilient development and good natural resource management, in tackling wildlife trafficking, in conserving biodiversity
- Strong **local government and partner support** for these local institutions to deliver change, including supportive legislation; strong financial, political and technical support; and effective partnerships and investor relations.





PEACE AND SECURITY

- **Strategies and capacity to provide peace and security**, which are essential pre-requisites for inward investments and business development in these marginalised areas, for conserving biodiversity and tackling wildlife crime



LIVELIHOODS AND BUSINESS

- New or improved **livelihood investments** in health, education, water and infrastructure that can build human capacity and resilience to meet the challenges of the harsh ASAL environment and future climate change
- Incubation of **new and improved businesses** with investment and business skills, building on existing natural assets to grow livestock, agricultural and fisheries markets and value chains, but also creating new jobs and enterprises that diversify the local economy



NATURAL RESOURCES

- Knowledge, practice and institutions that can reverse environmental degradation by **managing natural resources for greater productivity and diversity**, building on the best traditional management practices with new technologies and knowledge to re-create resilient ecosystems
- Seeing **wildlife as a major economic asset** that can be developed for tourism, jobs and income, rather than a threat to be eliminated or poached for subsistence or to fuel criminal networks and the international wildlife trafficking trade

Why Community Conservancies?

We believe community conservancies are the most effective way for government and development agencies to deliver the right, sustainable solutions to the inter-linked challenges facing northern Kenya's communities, landscapes and wildlife.

These changes all need to work together to effect the transformations needed. The **conservancy institutions lie at the heart of this change**, bringing stronger community leadership and ownership, a voice for marginalised women and youth, and a platform for investing in security, for building peace between communities, for developing resilient livelihoods, for attracting government services and business investments, and for planned management of the rangelands, wildlife and other natural resources which underpin the rural economy and northern Kenya's biodiversity.



These natural resources which northern Kenya's pastoralists and others share, and on which they critically depend for their livelihoods and economic growth, are **all on community land** (or at sea). This requires a response to the above challenges which differs from private land and resources. Community conservancies have proven to be a strong organising force for communities sharing community land, and are increasingly recognised in Kenya and more widely in Africa as an important model for addressing these challenges.

With NRT's help, community conservancies are building on traditional community institutions and cultures, combined with modern practices, technologies and governance concepts, in an empowering approach that **puts decision-making in the hands of organised communities**. These improved local institutions are now developing programmes on peace-building and security, on livelihoods and business development, and on sustainable management and conservation of rangelands, wildlife and other natural resources, that are starting to meet the challenges identified.

Peace and development will never be fully realised in northern Kenya until the rangelands are rehabilitated and better managed, and issues of livestock carrying capacity and rangelands governance are directly addressed.

The most systemic challenge is the degradation of the rangelands. Without healthy rangelands, there can be no lasting peace or sustainable pastoralist development. If community conservancies can begin to stabilize and then recover the rangelands, peace and development can follow. Given how competition for grass and water drives conflict, a lasting peace cannot be built until the rangelands are recovered. And – flying in the face of much development intervention – development cannot be sustained until the rangelands recover. Some may disagree, arguing that investments in the non-livestock economy and in education, health and water can be made without recovering the rangelands. But a sustainable pastoralist economy – which is based on livestock – cannot be generated until the rangelands are rehabilitated and better managed, and issues of livestock carrying capacity and rangelands governance are directly addressed. And likewise wildlife – another pillar of the Kenyan economy and high-potential income and livelihoods opportunity in the north – cannot be conserved until there is security and productive rangeland habitats. Community conservancies can play a central role in the recovery of these rangelands – possibly not achieving this within the timeframe of this 5-year plan, but certainly in starting to turn the tide.

By recognising that peace, development and conservation are three legs of the same stool, NRT is not just a conservation organisation, but is using threats to wildlife and degraded natural resources as an entry point for driving change in sustainable development.

However, these are closely intertwined themes. NRT recognises that to achieve locally-driven conservation and sustainable management of natural resources, community conservancies need the benefits of livelihoods development as the driving incentive. Peace and security in turn create the stability needed to attract financial investments and new business opportunities that create jobs and income. And this peace cannot be achieved without better managing shared natural resources on communal land. Thus NRT believes that **peace, livelihoods and conservation are “three legs of the same stool”**, all three are needed to succeed. And a supportive policy and legal framework is needed to create the positive cycle of stability, investment, socio-economic impacts and ecological recovery which will generate sustainable change and resilience.

Community conservancies can, are and will help to achieve this.

By recognising that peace, development and conservation are three legs of the same stool, **NRT is not just a conservation organisation**, but is using threats to wildlife and degraded natural resources as an entry point for driving change in sustainable development. Evidence also shows that Community Conservancies can contribute to a number of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, and can address:

- **Poverty (SDG 1)**, providing a focus for Government investments in social and economic development, and stimulating diversification and **growth of household income and the green economy (SDG 8)**
- **Social exclusion and gender equality (SDG 5 & 10)**, providing a voice and empowerment for women and youth
- **Climate change adaptation (SDG 13)**, enabling communities to better cope with climate shocks, adapt to a future changing climate and build more resilient ecosystems
- **Depleted natural resources (SDG 14 & 15)**, stabilizing, recovering and sustainably managing northern Kenya's rangeland, forest and marine resources, tackling the illegal wildlife trade which plagues society and wildlife, and protecting endangered wildlife species
- **Insecurity, building peace and security** in remote areas, and strong, accountable local institutions **(SDG 16)**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



There are a number of key **assumptions** and risks in this development hypothesis. While the NRT community conservancy model is largely proven, with the history of NRT's success over the past decade, the key continuing assumptions underlying the model are that local leadership will continue to rise to the challenges of governing conservancies well, that County Governments and other partners will see the opportunity and work through conservancies, and that conservancies can generate enough finance to sustain the momentum. A large part of NRT's role is to ensure that these assumptions are fulfilled.

PART B

NRT STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022



B1. MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

NRT's Vision

Community conservancies become **the leading local institutions for building resilient communities and ecosystems on community land.**

These institutions will be better able to cope with climate shocks, help build peace and security, effectively tackle the illegal wildlife trade, provide a focus for investments in social and economic development, stimulate diversification and growth of the green economy, and underpin the sustainable management of Kenya's rich wildlife and natural resources

NRT's Mission

To develop resilient Community Conservancies that transform lives, secure peace, and conserve natural resources

Value Propositions

Community conservancies are strong, independent, sustainable, well-governed and well-managed local institutions, with genuine community-led decision-making, widely understood and approved by the community at large, leading to strong community ownership. Community Conservancies also have clear rights, benefits and responsibilities for achieving peace and security, livelihoods development and sustainable natural resource management on community land.

NRT is the unique community umbrella conservation and development organisation, representing and supporting member community conservancies in Northern and Coastal Kenya, drawing its strength and mandate directly from the member communities, governed by conservancy chairpersons through an overarching Council of Elders, and holding up high standards of communities governing and managing their own community land.

Core Values

- Respect for traditional livelihoods and other community values
- Coexistence of livestock, people and wildlife
- Community-led decision making
- Meaningful livelihoods enhanced through conservation
- Competent governance and financial accountability
- Equitable distribution of benefits
- Environmental, social and economic sustainability in all our work
- Apolitical, without allegiance to any political party, creed, or ethnic background
- Credible, measurable results
- Credible partnerships with Government

Roles of NRT and Community Conservancies

Role of community conservancies:

- Ensuring good governance – including representation of women and youth, transparency and accountability to their communities, and equitable benefit-sharing
- Managing programmes - that deliver peace and security, enhanced livelihoods and business development, natural resource management and endangered species conservation
- Engaging with County Governments and development partners – to secure policy, legal, financial and technical support to sustain their operations and impacts

Role of NRT:

- Supporting community conservancies: building capacity for good governance, leadership and management, ensuring inclusion (youth and women) and accountability (boards to communities), building community awareness, accessing markets and investment, incubating businesses, supporting peace, livelihoods and conservation programmes
- Creating an enabling environment: encouraging supportive policies and laws, sustainable finance, government engagement, public understanding, knowledge (M&E, research), and effective partnerships
- **Creating NRT Trading**: stimulating businesses for conservancies, community groups and households within member conservancies, and in the long-term creating profits for the sustainable financing of Community Conservancies
- Future vision: NRT is likely to change in future decades, possibly reducing its direct role in fund-raising, capacity-building and programmes on natural resources, livelihoods and business, as county governments, investors and other partners take on stronger roles. However NRT will maintain its core role as the umbrella organisation representing the interests of its member conservancies in northern Kenya, supporting the Council of Elders, maintaining high standards of conservancy governance, and working closely with the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA), the respective county governments, and the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and Kenya Police.





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B2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To deliver the vision of resilient communities and ecosystems in northern Kenya, **NRT will support the community conservancies to make significant and measurable progress** in transforming lives, securing peace, and conserving natural resources.

Transform lives

- More people feeling empowered, having a voice, and benefitting from conservation
- Improved human development (education, health, water)
- Improved financial literacy for savings and credit
- More jobs and increased household incomes
- Increased commercial revenues for conservancies

Secure peace

- More people feeling safe and secure
- Reduced incidences of ethnic conflict
- Fewer incidences of conflict over grazing and water
- Fewer incidences of human-wildlife conflict
- Reduced stock theft and road banditry

Conserve natural resources

- Stabilised rangeland, forest, water, marine ecosystems, with capacity to develop their productivity and sustainability
- Rangeland improvements for livestock and wildlife in heavily degraded areas
- Reduced illegal killing of elephants
- Stabilised wildlife populations
- More businesses and enhanced livelihoods linked to conservation

This will be achieved by focussing on **four complementary objectives** in this Strategic Plan period (2018-2022).



OBJECTIVE 1: GOVERNANCE

To strengthen the governance of Community Conservancies, and increase Government support to these conservancies.

- **Output 1** - Well-governed **community conservancies**
- **Output 2** - Supportive **Government policies, laws and finance**



OBJECTIVE 2: PEACE AND SECURITY

To build peace between ethnic communities and support Government in ensuring security for people and wildlife.

- **Output 3** - Effective **peace-building** between ethnic communities.
- **Output 4** - Effective **community policing** in support of Government security agencies



OBJECTIVE 3: LIVELIHOODS AND BUSINESS

To invest in community priorities for improving their lives, and create the conditions for growing jobs and businesses

- **Output 5** - Equitable and responsive **livelihood investments** in conservancy communities
- **Output 6** - Successful **enterprises and financial services** for households, community groups, conservancies and NRT Trading policies, laws and finance



OBJECTIVE 4: NATURAL RESOURCES

To stabilise and improve the productivity of grasslands for livestock, and the health and diversity of the wildlife and natural resources which underpin the economy of northern Kenya

- **Output 7** - Sustainable **rangelands management** systems
- **Output 8** - Flagship **species and habitat conservation** programmes
- **Output 9** - **Forest and marine ecosystem management** systems





Objective 1: Governance

To strengthen the governance of community conservancies, and increase Government support to these conservancies.

Output 1: Well-governed community conservancies.

This will provide the local institutional platform for building dialogue and peace between ethnic communities, for seeking investments in socio-economic development, and for negotiating sustainable management and conservation of communal land and natural resources.

This will be achieved by investing in:

- **Leadership** and governance skills, to ensure there is capacity, capability and elements of traditional authority that can govern conservancies well, with transparency, accountability and equity in benefit-sharing
- **Inclusion** and voice, with equitable representation of women and youth in decision-making structures and economic opportunities
- **Management** skills, to ensure effective conservancy operations and delivery of results
- **Communication** skills and capacity to build wide community awareness, local influence and effective partnerships
- **Conservancy plans and programmes** for peace-building, community development and enterprise, natural resource management, and long-term conservancy sustainability





Manella Furrer

Output 2: Supportive Government policies, laws and finance

This will complement the efforts of local communities to govern their land and natural resources, provide strength and support to Community Conservancies, give political backing through MCAs and the County Assemblies, and fulfil the mandate of devolved government to provide local public services and meet local development priorities. Government policy, legal and financial security is needed to sustain the proven impacts of community conservation across northern Kenya.

This will be achieved by investing in:

- **Engagement with County Governments, Assemblies and MPs** by conservancies to ensure understanding and build support for their work
- **County and National policies and laws** that support conservancies, helping policy-makers with influence, advice, field experience and drafting as appropriate
- **County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs)**, supporting Conservancies to engage with the planning and implementation processes to ensure conservancy priorities are voiced and supported
- **Lobbying for financial support from government** for conservancy operations and programmes
- Ensuring that **donor and NGO projects** on peace, development and conservation can be delivered effectively through Community Conservancies, and not through parallel structures that undermine conservancies



Manella Furrer



Objective 2: Peace and security

To build peace between ethnic communities and support Government in ensuring security for people and wildlife.

Output 3: Effective peace-building between ethnic communities.

This will continue to build towards peaceful co-existence between the many ethnic groups in northern Kenya, which is essential for successful investment in socio-economic development and conservation. It will place a check on divisive, ethnically-driven politics and historical animosity between ethnic groups, with a multi-stakeholder approach to behaviour change, both preventative and reactive to conflict and tension.

This will be achieved by investing in:

- **Conflict identification and mapping**, using ethnically balanced teams of elders, women and young men as **peace ambassadors**, with capacity and capability for dialogue and conflict prevention, to harness local knowledge and understand conflict drivers.
- **Conflict prevention**, including training and awareness about conflict management; peace radio, sports events and youth programmes; and women's engagement in household level influencing, all to build **mutual understanding and respect** amongst the youth, and create a political culture that reduces ethnic incitement and impunity
- **Conflict resolution**, including improved coordination of peace-building and security operations to ensure an integrated approach to stabilisation. The conservancies' peace ambassadors, governance and ranger networks can **convene dialogue to de-escalate tensions early**, and work with the Kenya Police's Peace-Cop project which has proved a successful alliance.
- **Conflict transformation** through enhanced knowledge and understanding and by addressing the root causes of conflict in a holistic manner. **Accurate reporting** of insecurity, conflict or tension, and **informed analysis and sensitive leadership** by the Joint Operations and Communications Centre (JOCC) can build better understanding of conflict triggers and the most effective responses

Output 4: Effective community policing in support of Government security agencies

This will help to stop wildlife poaching and secure threatened wildlife, prevent or respond to livestock theft in order to help break the cycle of retaliation after raids, bring security for people and reinforce peace-building, and build long-term confidence in tourism, livelihood and business investments.

This will be achieved by investing in:

- A cadre of **rangers in every conservancy** that are trained at KWS Manyani and follow KWS and police-approved Standard Operating Procedures
- A series of **multi-ethnic mobile teams** that are deployed under government authority, and respond to human and wildlife insecurity across the region
- High quality **ranger training** to refresh and supplement basic KWS training, and to reinforce human rights awareness and legal compliance
- Adequate **equipment and uniforms** for rangers to operate effectively
- **Human intelligence** and **innovative software** coordinated through the Joint Operations and Communications Centre (JOCC) to support all community policing efforts with analysis, reporting, field operations and government liaison
- **Liaison with Government security agencies** (KWS and Kenya Police) through formalised agreements, coordination and communications





Objective 3: Livelihoods and business

To invest in community priorities for improving their lives, and create the conditions for growing jobs and businesses

Output 5: Equitable and responsive livelihood investments in conservancy communities

These will directly build social and human capital, reinforce peace, develop resilience and economic opportunities, and be a positive dividend of conservation, strengthening community bonds and validating the concept of the conservancy.

This will be achieved by investing in:

- Viable **Conservancy Livelihood Fund projects** for climate adaptation, economic stimulus, social empowerment and human development, that respond to local needs, build on conservancy management plans, and maximise the extent of direct and indirect conservancy beneficiaries
- Using the CLF to **leverage other livelihoods finance** from County Governments and others, to build sustainability, develop partnerships and maximise impact
- Better governed and integrated **water resource management** in conservancies, based on assessment of current water infrastructure and operations, water potential and need, options for technical solutions and optimal water governance systems to conserve, use and manage water
- Successful **health, education and reproductive health programmes**, driven by needs analysis, available resources, and conservancy priorities.





Output 6: Successful enterprises and financial services for households, community groups, conservancies and NRT Trading

These will generate household income, diversify the local economy, provide a driver of change from ethnic conflict and criminality, and generate conservancy-level business from conservation. NRT Trading businesses will provide access to markets for conservancy members, and eventually generate profits for the Pooled Conservancy Fund.

This will be achieved, through the NRT-owned business incubator NRT Trading, by investing in:

- **Business extension services and financial literacy** through structured NRT Trading support, training, SACCO investments and marketing – including BeadWORKS and other business opportunities – to create household-level jobs and small businesses
- **Tourism development** including eco-tourism attractions and circuits, destination branding and marketing, tourism investments into conservancies, community preparedness, and standards for destination management – to create conservancy-level jobs, income and financial self-sufficiency
- **Livestock trading** that provides opportunities for conservancy members to trade conveniently, equitably and profitably, linked to improving governance and management of the rangelands
- **NRT Trading's capacity to develop, pilot and scale-up conservancy-relevant businesses**, develop markets, broker agreements between Community Conservancies and tourism operators, and offer business extension and financial services to conservancy households and business groups



Objective 4: Natural resources

To stabilise and improve the productivity of grasslands for livestock, and the health and diversity of the wildlife and natural resources which underpin the economy of northern Kenya

Output 7: Sustainable rangelands management systems

These will start to stabilize, recover and sustain the grasslands that underpin the pastoralist economy, reduce competition and conflict for water and grass, and improve forage for livestock and habitat for wildlife. Based on the last five years of hard lessons with little progress, the challenge can only be met with a paradigm shift, deeper and wider understanding and awareness, landscape-level grazing plans and governance systems that build on traditional knowledge, and strong government regulation.

This will be achieved by investing in:

- **Awareness and capacity** in all stakeholders to understand and seek solutions to degradation of natural resources, using innovative approaches to generate collective action and respect for land ownership, settlement plans, livestock and grazing plans, by-laws, traditional knowledge and ecosystem functions
- **Rangelands governance systems**, including local decision-making structures, by-laws and enforcement incentives, agreed by every stakeholder group, built on traditional knowledge and with strong policy, legal and political support from County Governments
- **Rangelands management and rehabilitation plans and practices**, built up from each settlement, aggregated at conservancy level, and shared across the region, in order to stabilize current declines and allow recovery and productive use in future – including household grass banks, clearing invasive species, warrior/herder forums, elder-endorsed enforcement plans, rangelands social clubs,
- **Fodder production and supplementary feeding systems** for livestock as part of Conservancy small stock and cattle herd management and grazing plans





- **Settlement plans** in each Conservancy to prevent further fragmentation of the land and disruption of dry season grazing areas
- **Research knowledge**, better understanding of the **barriers to behaviour change** for improved natural resource management, and **community-based vegetation and wildlife monitoring** and feedback systems
- **Grassland carbon markets** as a means of financing conservancy rangeland management through sales of grassland carbon sequestration credits
- Options for **control and removal of invasive plants** such as *Opuntia* spp., *Acacia reficiens* and *Prosopis* spp which threaten productivity of the grasslands

Output 8: Flagship species and habitat conservation programmes

These will secure populations of endangered or threatened wildlife, create positive economic and cultural opportunities, which in turn can reinforce peace, improve natural resource management and validate the conservancy concept.

This will be achieved by investing in:

- **Wildlife species conservation programmes** covering security, translocation, education and awareness, sanctuary development and disease control for rhino, hirola, elephant, giraffe, oryx and other wildlife species
- Identifying **gaps in the conservation mosaic** across northern Kenya, with a view to highlighting landscape connectivity, migration dispersal for wildlife, potential human-wildlife conflict zones
- Mitigation of **human-wildlife conflict** in conflict hotspot areas, order to reduce threats to people, highlight investment needs (e.g. elephant fencing), secure wildlife migration corridors and safeguard positive attitudes to wildlife

Output 9: Forest and marine ecosystem management systems

These will start to stabilise, recover and sustain the forest and marine resources and fisheries that underpin local economies and are essential for the livelihoods of many, improve habitat for wildlife and protect threatened species, and conserve resources that can in future provide carbon credit incomes for community conservation and management efforts.

This will be achieved by investing in:

- Establishment and enforcement of **locally managed marine areas** (LMMAs) through Conservancy Beach Management Units
- Promoting the use of **alternative non-destructive fishing gear** in coastal fisheries
- Facilitating Conservancy **exchange visits** to community marine conservation projects elsewhere to learn from best practice
- Appropriate **community-managed monitoring systems** to track changes in marine ecosystem health and fish-stocks
- Developing and enforcing Conservancy **forest management plans and by-laws** for forest use, and establishment of Community Forest Associations (CFAs) in collaboration with Kenya Forest Service
- Enhancing **traditional governance of forests** that promote sustainable use of forest products
- CFAs to carry out **reforestation activities** in degraded forests and mangroves
- Improving the **enforcement against illegal logging**
- Building **awareness and capacity** in all stakeholders to understand and address degradation of forest and marine resources
- Exploring **forest carbon and blue carbon** initiatives that may provide income for Conservancies managing forest or marine resources.



B3. CAPABILITY, POLICIES AND FINANCING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

There is significant momentum behind the community conservancies now, and to sustain this requires a combination of financial resources and talented people, specialist long-term partnerships, supportive policies, regulations and finance from government, and an awareness, capability and mindset change amongst traditional communities fit for the future. There is also pressure and opportunity for further growth, from County Governments, communities and private investors – although NRT will resist further growth without secure long-term funding.

Capability: the skills, knowledge, incentives and partners to succeed

A proven leadership and management training programme is building the capabilities required for conservancy boards and managers to lead a sustainable and independent future. This training will be offered to a wider stakeholder group, including especially to youth leaders who can lead the way with peace-building and natural resource management, women leaders and entrepreneurs, and other respected elders. High levels of training for rangers, mobile security teams, and KWS and Police partners will ensure the capabilities to sustain the NRT security operating model, and indeed sustainability must be underpinned by good security.

More emphasis will be placed on **local communications in conservancy communities**, raising awareness and building knowledge and understanding of the critical challenges. This will be essential to creating a mindset fit for the future, so that conservancy communities can develop informed solutions, build on cultural traditions that help and not hinder, and explore innovations, alternatives and adaptations that support resilient livelihoods and ecosystems.

Building capability among conservancy leadership and membership is the key to a sustainable and independent future for conservancies. That is why we plan to include more stakeholders in the transformative leadership and management training that has already been offered to boards and managers. NRT will develop a systematic approach to weaning conservancies off financial dependence, while ensuring that self-sufficient conservancies will still maintain benefits of the NRT umbrella.



Incentives and pressure for conservancies to **graduate from financial dependence on NRT** will be developed. A number of conservancies are over 15 years old, some of these are mature and relatively independent while the majority still rely on NRT for support in fund-raising, governance and development programmes. To avoid the risk of permanent dependence, NRT will develop a more systematic approach to conservancy self-sufficiency, for conservancies to establish, develop and mature under NRT guidance, building up benefit streams and incentives for community conservation to continue while also providing a timeframe for moving to financial and governance independence. Self-sufficient conservancies will still maintain benefits of the NRT umbrella, including continued membership of NRT and the Council of Elders, access to the NRT Pooled Conservancy Fund and to NRT Trading markets, as well as ad hoc access to NRT support for governance crisis management and technical assistance.

A **wide set of partners** will further strengthen capability, notably with partners that can offer financial and technical support in livelihoods development, natural resources management and peace-building – to reduce the burden on NRT. However, to be effective such partners will require an operating philosophy that respects the core values of conservancies and NRT. NRT will retain its role as the representative umbrella organisation of the conservancies, maintaining high standards of governance and management. NRT will maintain its close relationship with Lewa Wildlife Conservancy as host to its headquarters and operations, and partner in a range of programmes such as security and education. And NRT will continue to work closely with government, including local governments and the police, wildlife, forestry and fisheries agencies.

Policy: supportive government policies and regulations

A number of critical areas of national **policy and legislation** are starting to shape the future of community conservancies in Kenya, including the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act (2013)

3. KES 100 = US\$1



Sophie Harrison

and the new Community Land Act (2016), and also local government policies. NRT has been influencing the shape of this legislation, through support to the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) in drafting policy advice, drafting regulations with KWS, and lobbying legislators. As the regulations under the Community Land Act are developed, NRT will also seek to ensure the experience and needs of conservancy communities are met, given how critical this legislation is to the future governance of community land across Kenya.

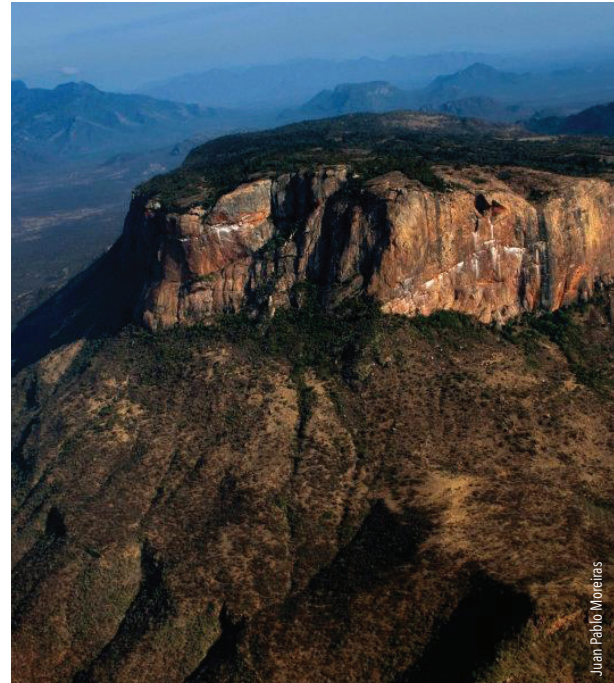
Other policy and legislation relating to areas such as devolution, agriculture and livestock, women and youth, infrastructure, water and tourism will also impact conservancies, and NRT will ensure that KWCA continues to represent and lobby for conservancy communities' interests.

Finances: the funds and people to sustain community conservancies

Community conservancies require significant investment in institution building, infrastructure and operational costs, and they and NRT need to attract and motivate high caliber staff. In addition to the capital start-up costs of an HQ, security outposts and a vehicle (currently approximately KES 20m)³, the annual operating cost of an average conservancy is currently KES 11m, with additional support costs of KES 9m per conservancy for peace, livelihoods, security, wildlife, rangelands, business development programmes. NRT's support costs add a further KES 9m per conservancy.

The **current annual operating costs of NRT with 35 member conservancies** is thus approximately KES 1bn. This will increase annually with inflation. Our evidence is that the NRT conservancy model is the most viable and effective one. Cheaper operating costs, for a shorter time, without NRT support and without capital and program funds, will not deliver the impacts that NRT has seen, and could result in "conservancies on paper only". This KES 1bn (US\$10m) annual cost should be seen as cost-effective compared

4. NRT has already established the Pooled Conservancy Fund, to which NRT member conservancies can apply for annual operational funds. This mechanism is building experience for conservancies to apply for, manage and account for grant funds, experience which they are using in applying for other grant funds, e.g. from County Governments.



Juan Pablo Moreiras



Juan Pablo Moreiras

to the consequences of not having conservancies across the north – historically this has included ethnic conflict and insecurity, degradation of natural resources and wildlife, and poor development and investment. Compared also to the costs of local government and public services in northern Kenya, this is also a cost-effective price tag.

Currently this funding is provided mainly by international donors, who show continued strong support, and NRT is making headway with generating more commercial and county government support. The **strategy for long-term financial sustainability** is to re-balance the current ratio of donor, commercial and government funding (86:5:9 in 2017), and to develop an NRT Trust Fund, to deliver a more appropriate proportion of funds from each source.

Donor financing

It is unrealistic to assume that commercial revenue and government funding can sustain the community conservancy model alone. Northern Kenya's biodiversity represents a significant global public good, and thus can justify external donations to maintain it. Further justification for aid funds is that community conservancies can make a significant contribution to building resilient communities that will adapt to climate change impacts and reduce future calls on humanitarian assistance.

To provide a vehicle for sustained donor funding, NRT will work in close partnership The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Conservation International (CI) to establish an **NRT Conservation Trust Fund (CTF)** that will yield sustained revenue to support conservancy operations. With a \$50m capitalisation, this may yield \$2-3m per year – to be dispersed through the Pooled Conservancy Fund⁴. Further regular donor support will be generated through grant applications to agencies, foundations and philanthropists who have specialist interests in conservation or development.

Commercial revenues

Commercial revenues to the conservancies in 2017 were KES 73m, 40% of which contributed KES 29m to conservancy operational funds, including security. Commercial revenues thus have a realistic prospect of contributing to conservancy operating costs. Conservancies will aim to increase this revenue through growth of tourism fees, levies on cattle and bead sales and other potential NRT Trading businesses, and Payments for Ecosystem Services.

Government funding

NRT is already providing significant support to communities in sectors where support should be expected from the newly devolved county governments: peace, security, livelihoods development, infrastructure, services and investment. NRT and a number of Conservancies have developed good working relations with the County Governments, especially in Isiolo, Marsabit and Samburu, and these will deepen and expand.

A key instrument of engagement between conservancies and county government will be the new Conservancy Management and Community Development Plans, which will start to link with the County Integrated Development Plans, help define funding priorities and mechanisms for the counties, and develop greater clarity in the roles of devolved government in supporting community development.

Samburu County Government is leading the way with contributions in 2016 of KES 25m to NRT conservancies for infrastructure development, and KES 90m committed to new conservancies. Isiolo and Marsabit Counties are also starting to commit funds for conservancies – albeit for capital expenditure rather than operating costs as yet. NRT and the Conservancies leadership will develop stronger engagement and understanding, and lobby for County Governments to grow their support for conservancies.





B4. IMPLEMENTATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND MONITORING RESULTS

The broad challenges and solutions for community conservation remain largely the same as during the 2012 - 2017 Strategic Plan period, relating to peace, livelihoods and conservation. The approach has proven successful, but with a need for consolidation, improved governance, deeper capacity, scaled up engagement with county governments, and smarter ways of working.

This Strategic Plan provides the basis for developing a fresh detailed Results Framework, with indicators, milestones and 5-year targets set against current baselines. NRT currently has 2015-2020 funding agreements with USAID and DANIDA as major donors, and related results frameworks, which will need to evolve to cover the 2018-2022 period, and indicators and targets will be refined to reflect progress and new priorities.

This Strategic Plan and revised results framework will also be used to prepare annual operating plans and budgets, and the robust monitoring system already in place will be strengthened to ensure timely reporting and accountability.

A comprehensive communications strategy will be implemented, with a vision to ensure that NRT is universally accepted, understood and respected for developing Community Conservancies in northern and coastal Kenya. NRT's communications work will create credibility, assert legitimacy and ensure coherence in its content and media.

NRT has a new CEO and Senior Management Team, the NRT Board is being refreshed with some retiring and some new board members, and the Council of Elders remains stronger, more vibrant and more empowered than ever. This Strategic Plan will be the guiding document for this governing structure, to deliver an ambitious and transformational change for conservation and development in northern Kenya over the next 5 years.



EMBASSY OF DENMARK
Danida



**FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR
L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL**



Baringo County
Government



Garissa County
Government



Isiolo County
Government



Laikipia County
Government



Lamu County
Government



Marsabit County
Government



Meru County
Government



Samburu County
Government



County Government of
TANA RIVER



West Pokot County
Government



Logos under development:

- Kirimon
- Masol
- Naapu
- Nanapisho
- Nannapa
- Narupa
- Nkoteiya

TOGETHER WE ARE



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