



MashinaniWORKS
Progress from the grassroots

ANNUAL REPORT

»
2024





Cover Photo: Michael Moile, an Ujuzi Manyattani graduate from Lekurukki Community Conservancy, Laikipia County, puts his vocational training to use, as he repairs a motorbike.

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Abbreviations

ASALs: Arid and Semi-arid Lands

KNQA: Kenya National Qualifications Authority

MoU: Memorandum of Understanding

NRT: Northern Rangelands Trust

PLWD: Persons Living with Disabilities

RPL: Recognition of Prior Learning

SACCO: Savings and Credit Cooperative

TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

TVETA: Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority

UBM: Ufugaji Bora Mashinani

For this report, Ksh 129 = US\$ 1

Who We Are



Our Vision

Empowering historically marginalised youth and women in Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands to improve their livelihoods through trade and commerce.



Our Mission

To create sustainable, environment-friendly local economies for communities, enabling them to earn diversified incomes that help alleviate poverty, and build peace in areas with natural resource-based conflict.



Our History

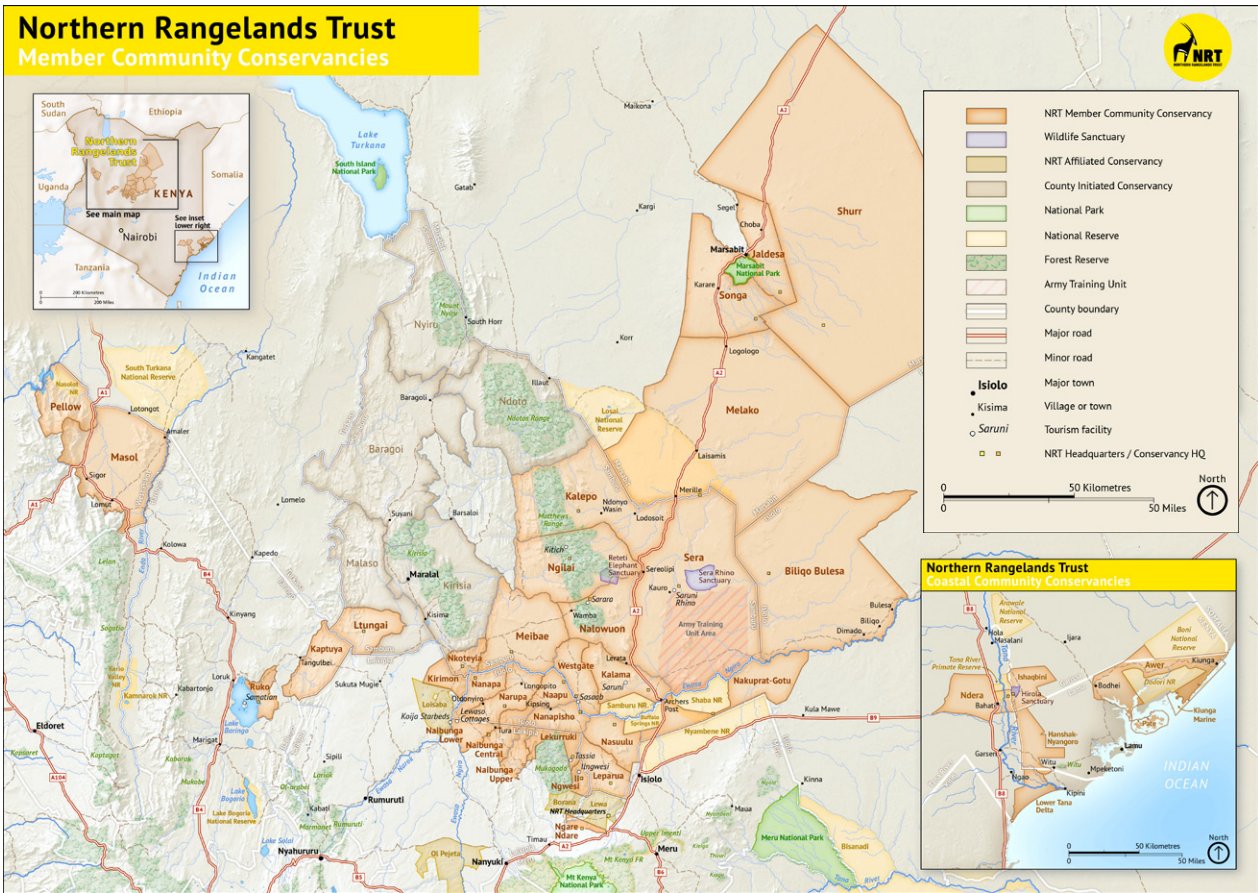
Since our inception in 2014 as NRT Trading, we have been dedicated to empowering communities in their journey towards economic self-reliance.

Initially established as a subsidiary of the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), NRT Trading was founded as a business accelerator for social and conservation impact enterprises operating in northern Kenya. Over time, it became a key player in driving local economic development and contributing to the preservation of natural ecosystems.

In 2023, recognising the need to align with the growing aspirations of the communities we serve, NRT Trading rebranded to MashinaniWORKS. This strategic shift was more than just a name change. It represented our renewed commitment to deepening impact, enhancing community ownership, and fostering sustainable economic growth at the grassroots level.

Our name, MashinaniWORKS, emphasises our focus on "*mashinani*" (grassroots in Swahili) areas in Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands, where we work to empower historically marginalised youth and women and improve their livelihoods through trade and commerce.

Where We Work



The Challenge

The future of the five million people living in the Arid and Semi-arid Lands (ASALs) of northern Kenya, as well as the wildlife that live among them, lies in the aspirations, empowerment, and work of indigenous men and women, and depends on progress made from the grassroots level.

For decades, the people and communities in northern Kenya have been marginalised, trapped in a cycle of poverty, and cut off from advancements made in other parts of the country. The region’s remoteness, restricted investment in essential services and infrastructure, cultural diversity and historical conflict, have rendered many development programmes inaccessible and ineffective. Climate change, rapid social transformation and adverse effects from the pandemic add to the woes, escalating conflict over scarce resources, and threatening centuries-old cultures and ways of life.

Driving Economic Growth at the Grassroots

MashinaniWORKS empowers the people in Kenya's ASALs—men, women, and youth—to improve their lives through the development of marketable skills, sustainable enterprise, and commerce.

We believe that skill-based income forms the foundation for alleviating poverty and building resilient livelihoods. It creates confidence, improves lives, and changes mindsets. The possession of a skill creates job opportunities and attracts investment.

MashinaniWORKS focuses on driving progress in the most important aspects of grassroots economic development:



Training and education

Providing in-demand skills that are accessible (delivered in the villages) and attainable (learner-centric content design).



Value chain development

Supporting the establishment of businesses that are environmentally sustainable, leverage local resources, and can grow.



Financial tools and services

Providing formal, accessible, reliable, and relevant financial instruments.



Empowerment opportunities

Providing women and youth the means to build their own futures.



Lifetime Impact Highlights

Since its founding in 2014, MashinaniWORKS has directly impacted over 10,000 people and benefitted approximately 100,000 families and communities in Kenya's ASALs, reducing poverty and increasing financial independence.

Ksh **1.12** billion

(USD 8.68 million) generated in tourism revenue since 2012

Ksh **80** million

(USD 620,155.03) earned by BeadWORKS artisans

Ksh **267.45** million

(USD 2.07 million) generated by BeadWORKS in product sales

Ksh **13.37** million

(USD 103,643.41) contributed by BeadWORKS in conservation fees

Ksh **235** million

(USD 1.82 million) disbursed in loans to 5,817 Rangelands SACCO members, financing start-up business set up and expansion

Loans worth

Ksh **130** million

(USD 1.00 million) repaid by Rangelands SACCO borrowers

Ksh **1.6** billion

(USD 12.40 million) injected into the local economy through Biashara Mashinani's interventions, improving community livelihoods

1,200

women across 9 NRT member community conservancies benefitting from BeadWORKS

2,500

community members are receiving regular medical care and 3,500 children are now attending school as a result of improved income from BeadWORKS

1,556

women and youth from 31 NRT member conservancies graduated from Ujuzi Manyattani, a vocational training programme

10

practical and marketable vocational skills offered by Ujuzi Manyattani, with a 99% completion rate

17

tourism management trainings conducted

6,331

active members enrolled in Rangelands SACCO

45.8%

of Ujuzi Manyattani graduates are female, in line with MashinaniWORKS' gender and social inclusion strategy

98%

increase in annual revenue from tourism facilities within MashinaniWORKS scope

2024 in Numbers

BeadWORKS

- **Ksh 36.2 million** (USD 280,620.15) generated in product sales
- **Ksh 10.6 million** (USD 82,170.54) earned by BeadWORKS artisans from the production of 75,626 beaded items
- **Ksh 827,148** (USD 6,412) in sales generated by BeadWORKS' business-to-consumer e-commerce website
- **10%** increase in labor prices registered, ensuring fair compensation for BeadWORKS artisans
- **541** BeadWORKS artisans from 7 community conservancies (Naibunga Central, Lep-arua, Kalama, Sera, Il Ngwesi, West Gate, and Lekurruki) trained in entrepreneurship, equipping them with new skills beyond beading

Ujuzi Manyattani

- **564** women and youth trained in marketable vocational skills
- **424** of 564 trainees assessed and certified through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- **88%** of graduates started their own businesses, gaining self-employment
- **Ksh 150 million** (USD 1.16 million) injected into the local economy by graduates, creating previously nonexistent income streams



Rangelands SACCO

- **301** new members joined
- **Ksh 52.2 million** (USD 404,651.16) accrued by members in savings and shares
- **Ksh 24.4 million** (USD 189,147.28) disbursed to 300 loan beneficiaries
- **Ksh 17.6 million** (USD 136,434.10) in loans repaid by borrowers

Tourism

- **Ksh 17.7 million** (USD 137,209.30) in revenue produced by Tassia Lodge, a 149% increase from Ksh 1.3 million (USD 10,077.51) in 2021
- **Ksh 21.4 million** (USD 165,891.47) in revenue generated by the four community bandas (self-catering accommodation facilities), namely, Tassia, Olgaboli, Koiya Starbeds and Nkoteiya
- **Ksh 555,000** (USD 4,302.32) in bursaries disbursed by Koiya Starbeds and Olgaboli bandas, benefitting 119 students attending secondary school and tertiary institutions
- **Over Ksh 6 million** (USD 46,511.62) in Tassia Lodge revenues invested in community development projects including classroom renovation, school fencing and conservancy operations
- **69** community conservancy youth and board members underwent tourism training



Message from the **Chairperson**



The end of a year and the beginning of another presents an opportune time to reflect.

Looking back at the moments that defined 2024 and made it a transformative year at MashinaniWORKS, I am filled with immense gratitude.

As an organisation rooted in improving the livelihoods of Kenyans, particularly those in remote and marginalised ASALs, I take pride in MashinaniWORKS' delivering on its promise to design locally relevant solutions that resonate with the indigenous communities we serve.

In mid-2024, I had the honour of presenting the innovative Ujuzi Manyattani Programme to the President of Kenya, His Excellency Dr. William Ruto, when he visited our exhibition during the National TVET Centenary Celebrations ceremony, held at Kabete National Polytechnic. The President and the delegation of senior government officials, including Prime Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Musalia Mudavadi E.G.H., who accompanied him, commended our efforts to transform lives in the remotest parts of the country and expressed their support.

Hundreds of youth and women completed vocational skills training through our Ujuzi Manyattani Programme in 2024. It was a joy to celebrate their achievements when they graduated. The TVET Principal Secretary (PS), Dr. Esther Muoria, graced us with her presence at a graduation ceremony held in Isiolo County. At another held in Doldol, Laikipia County, we were honored to have the Wildlife PS, Hon. Silvia Museiya, and the ASALs PS, Hon. Kello Harsama, join us. Government support for Ujuzi Manyattani has been instrumental, enabling us to create pathways for youth and women to obtain nationally recognised certification for their skills. This has brought hope to many communities that have long been excluded from modern economies due to lack of education.

It takes significant investment to effectively operate Ujuzi Manyattani. We extend our deepest gratitude to all our donors and partners who have supported us throughout the five years of the Programme's existence, and look forward to working together to scale this empowering initiative. 2024 was a year of firsts, as we graduated our inaugural cohort of the Ufugaji Bora Mashinani Livestock Farmer Field School, in the esteemed presence of the Director of Livestock Production in the State Department for Livestock, Hon. Bishar Elmi.

Before the year ended, I had the opportunity to visit the community tourism facilities that MashinaniWORKS and NRT support. Operating under the Big North brand, these facilities are ideal vacation destinations for those seeking serenity, as well as the adventurous and wild at heart. I had my fair share of adventure in Nkoteiya Community Conservancy, where I encountered a family of elephants while on a safari down to the Ewaso Nyiro River. I invite you all to come and visit these community-owned facilities, engage with our communities, and immerse yourself in the scenic splendour that is northern Kenya.

We made remarkable strides in the achievement of our strategic goals in 2024, with 75,446 individuals benefitting from our livelihood development programmes. By equipping these community members with business management skills, we empowered them to contribute to the growth of their local economies.

As the new year unfolds, we remain committed to transparency and accountability. Impact assessments of our programmes were conducted, generating promising results. These are showcased in this annual report, which provides an in-depth view of the progress we made, fostering ongoing dialogue on ways we might enhance our operations and expand our reach.

I would now like to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your support of our mission throughout last year. Together, we are not only creating meaningful change, but also inspiring others to join us in transforming lives through conservation. I am excited about what lies ahead for MashinaniWORKS in 2025 and beyond.



Dr. Kevit Desai,
Board Chairperson
MashinaniWORKS



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Before joining Ujuzi Manyattani, I had no source of income and spent most of my days at home. The three-month training equipped me with the skills I needed, and I also received start-up toolkits to start my own hairdressing and beauty business in Ngaremara. Today, on a good day, I earn up to Ksh 4,000 (USD 31.00), which allows me to take care of my needs, support my parents, and even pay school fees for my siblings.

Hellen Erupe,

Ujuzi Manyattani graduate, Nakuprat-Gotu
Community Conservancy



Message from the CEO

In many respects, 2024 was truly extraordinary at MashinaniWORKS.

Alongside the numerous joyous graduations from our skills development programmes, we made great strides in strengthening our organisation. We also continued to gain momentum in the delivery of our mission, and improved the livelihoods of women and youth in Arid and Semi-arid Lands (ASALs) through skills training and business development.

The operationalisation of MashinaniWorks Limited (which previously operated as Northern Rangelands Trading Limited) as a company for the benefit of the people of Kenya was among the moments that made our year historic. Registered as a company limited by guarantee, we are governed by five guarantors who represent the interests of the company's stakeholders: the Chairperson of the Council of Elders of the Northern Rangelands Trust, the Chairperson of the Northern Rangelands Trust Board, the Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Rangelands Trust, the Chairperson of the MashinaniWORKS Board, and the Chief Executive Officer of MashinaniWORKS Limited.

The guarantors have appointed a Board to provide oversight and governance.

This transition was approved in 2023 by the Boards of Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) and (*the previous*) Northern Rangelands Trading Limited to drive clarity of focus. However, we maintain a close working relationship with NRT and continue to serve the community conservancies and counties of the ASALs.

Our organisational growth in 2024 was accelerated by the contributions of executive volunteers from the United States of America, Laura Bestor and Jim Buell, who generously dedicated nine months of their time. Their support enabled us to finalise company policies, develop fundraising materials, and refine processes and job descriptions, ultimately shaping our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. A particularly enjoyable part was the development of new logos for MashinaniWORKS and its programmes (*We all know how opinionated we are about logo design!*)

It would be an uphill, if not impossible task, to implement our strategic goals and multiply the positive impact of our programmes without the steadfast support of our key partners, who remain the cornerstone of our success.



I would therefore like to take this opportunity to acknowledge some of them:

- Heartiest congratulations to the Northern Rangelands Trust on its 20th Anniversary. I look forward to a continued strong partnership.
- The delegation from the United States Agency for International Development and its Local Works office, who travelled from Washington, D.C., to Nasuulu Community Conservancy, to attend the Ufugaji Bora Mashinani graduation and close out the transformative Local Works grant.
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and its donors, and the opportunity to showcase MashinaniWORKS to the TNC Global Board at West Gate Community Conservancy.
- Livelihood Impact Fund, who attended many of our graduations, spent considerable resources evaluating Ufugaji Bora Mashinani, our livestock programme, and has committed to scaling it.
- ICEP and its CEO, Bernhard Weber, who visited programme beneficiaries and women beaders.
- Officers from the Danish International Development Agency, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Italian Cooperation, and Agence Française de Développement, whose support through NRT has been instrumental to our success.

It is imperative that MashinaniWORKS earns the trust it receives from reputable donors by providing full transparency, accountability, and evidence-based results, and I am committed to ensuring we uphold our stellar reputation and credibility.

MashinaniWORKS's mission is bold, and to achieve it, we need a coalition.

In 2024, we focussed on forging new partnerships with the government, private sector, and non-profits with similar objectives. These efforts led to exciting and fruitful collaborations with multiple organisations including, GIZ, the World Food Programme, Family Bank Foundation, KCB Foundation, Safal MRM Foundation, Land and Life Foundation, Institute for Poverty Action, DevWorks, Swisscontact, Mercy Corps Kenya, the San Diego Zoo, Schneider Electric, Nuru Kenya and Generation Kenya.

As I conclude, I would like to express my gratitude to my phenomenal MashinaniWORKS team. Each of you has been integral to our growth, and your contributions have made a meaningful impact on the communities we serve. Thank you for your commitment to our mission and for going above and beyond every day. I am truly honored to work alongside such a talented group of individuals.

Throughout 2024 the MashinaniWORKS team continued to collaborate with communities to enhance livelihoods in ASALs. It is now my utmost pleasure to invite you all to read about the progress we made, the lives we transformed, and the impact we achieved, with supporters like you by our side.



Vishal Shah,
Chief Executive Officer,
MashinaniWORKS

Our Programmes



Ujuzi Manyattani Vocational Training

Over 60% of the young people entering adulthood in northern Kenya have no formal education. Their childhood was spent mastering the essential skills of traditional pastoralist life: herding livestock, surviving in the wild, understanding their environment, and learning the customs and governing principles of their cultures.

Having few marketable skills and with limited opportunities to earn a livelihood, many young people resort to livestock rustling and other illegal activities to generate an income.

In 2019, MashinaniWORKS launched the Ujuzi Manyattani Programme to deliver locally relevant vocational skills training for youth left out of the formal educational system. In partnership with county and national governments, Ujuzi Manyattani moved the classroom from buildings into the bush, providing mobile, high-quality, certified training in sought-after skills, under the shade of acacia trees. The Programme delivers impact by:

Increasing income: Ujuzi Manyattani graduates use their newly acquired vocational skills to start businesses and find jobs that instantly increase their income.

Relevant training: The courses are designed to address the specific needs of indigenous communities. They provide knowledge in tailoring and dressmaking, catering, motorbike repair, masonry, welding, plumbing, electrical and solar installation, mobile phone repair, hairdressing, and vessel repair and maintenance, among other skills.

Mobile delivery: Partner Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) trainers go to remote villages and conduct three months of practical training without disrupting trainees' way of life.

Support for success: Upon successful course completion, all Ujuzi Manyattani graduates are issued nationally-recognised certificates and start-up toolkits, enabling them to immediately begin working and earning. Graduates are also encouraged to join Rangelands SACCO and establish accounts, so they qualify for loans and other services that facilitate the expansion of their businesses, and the accumulation of sustainable climate-resilient wealth for their households.



In 2024:

- **564** youth and women were trained in 25 NRT member community conservancies across Isiolo, Marsabit, Samburu, Laikipia, Garissa and Lamu Counties.
- **424** of the 564 trainees were assessed and certified through RPL and issued nationally-recognised certificates.

Since its inception, Ujuzi Manyattani has trained 1,556 youth and women, equipping them with vocational skills. 88% of the Programme's graduates have launched their own businesses and contribute Ksh 150 million (USD 1.16 million) annually to their local economies, an income stream that did not exist before the advent of Ujuzi Manyattani.

Ujuzi Manyattani Training History (2019 – 2024)

Year	Conservancy	No. of Beneficiaries	Female Graduates	Male Graduates	Skills Trained
2019	Ltungai West Gate Nkoteiya	58	0	58	Motorbike repair Mobile phone repair Welding Masonry
2020	Ltungai Nakuprat-Gotu Biliqo Bulesa	66	2	64	Masonry Motorbike repair Mobile phone repair
2021	Jaldesa Shurr Oldonyiro Nakuprat-Gotu Nasuulu Songa Ltungai Meibae Kalama	394	164	230	Catering Hairdressing and beauty therapy Motorbike repair Mobile phone repair Masonry Electrical and solar installation
2022	Ruko Masol Biliqo Bulesa Ishaqbini Meibae Naibunga Lower Ltungai Nakuprat-Gotu Nasuulu Jaldesa Shurr Songa	264	158	106	Electrical and solar installation Tailoring and dressmaking Motorbike repair Mobile phone repair Catering Hairdressing and beauty therapy Masonry
2023	Songa Kiunga Naibunga Central Shurr Kaptuya	210	143	67	Vessel repair and maintenance Tailoring and dressmaking Hairdressing and beauty therapy Catering Motorbike repair

2024	Cherab, Garbatulla, Lep-arua, Shulmai, Maiyanat, Naibunga Upper, Il Ngwesi, Lekurukki, Kirimon, Sera, Kinna, Melako, Ishaqbini, Narupa, Biliqo, Naku-prat-Gotu, Meibae, Shurr, Jaldesa, Nasuulu, Pate, Songa, Nkoteiya, Naibunga Lower, Kalama	564	246	318	Plumbing Electrical and solar installation Hairdressing and beauty therapy Motorbike repair Mobile phone repair Tailoring and dressmaking Catering Masonry
Total		1,556	713	843	

Increasing Access to Education: Certification through Recognition of Prior Learning

Section 4(c) of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework Act 22 of 2014 mandates the Kenya National Qualifications Authority to develop a system of competence, life-long learning, and attainment of national qualifications. Section 8(1)(k) of the Act provides for the recognition of attainment of competencies, including skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values, regardless of where and how one acquired them.

In line with this, the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy was developed to guide the implementation of RPL for improved employability, mobility, self-esteem, and advanced learning. The policy aims to mitigate the challenges faced by disadvantaged individuals who possess competencies but lack certification, depriving them of fair opportunities compared to those who have attained competencies through the formal education system.



The Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA) accredited Nyeri National Polytechnic, granting it the power to implement the RPL policy and award nationally-recognised certificates.

In March 2024, an MoU was signed, formalising a partnership between Ujuzi Manyattani and Nyeri National Polytechnic, that made it possible for Ujuzi Manyattani trainees to be assessed and certified through RPL, fully integrating them into the formal education system and creating pathways for their career progression.

The partnership aims at bridging the gap between formal education and practical skills, and affords Ujuzi Manyattani trainees an invaluable opportunity to pursue advanced training and have their skills formally recognised and certified. This not only enhances trainees' employment prospects, but also provides the wider community with a pool of skilled youth who are ready to solve problems and drive economic growth at the grassroots.

424 learners so far have undertaken certification exams overseen by qualified assessors from the Nyeri National Polytechnic. While focussing on theoretical and practical applications, the assessments evaluate Ujuzi Manyattani trainees' competencies and highlight the knowledge and skills they have acquired during three months of vocational training.



424

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Ujuzi Manyattani: Empowering Youth in Kenya's ASALs through Vocational Training

The 13th of February was a day of unbridled joy and celebration for 140 youth from Leparua, Cherab and Garbatulla Community Conservancies, as they graduated from the Ujuzi Manyattani Programme after three months of vocational training in various courses including motorbike repair, tailoring and dressmaking, electrical and solar installation, hair-dressing and beauty therapy, catering, and mobile phone repair and maintenance.

The spectacular graduation ceremony held at Leparua Community Conservancy was attended by various stakeholders namely, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), ICEP, and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), who support the Programme, community members, as well as development partners, including Family Bank, TVET and national and county government officials.

The Principal Secretary (PS) of the State Department for Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the Ministry of Education, Dr. Esther Thaara Muoria, presided over the event and highlighted Ujuzi Manyattani's potential to drive economic growth in Kenya's ASALs.

Speaking on the importance of leveraging skills development to drive Kenya's growth, the PS lauded Ujuzi Manyattani for recognising and nurturing the potential of young people and women, and urged graduates to capitalise on their newfound skills to benefit from government initiatives.



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Ujuzi Manyattani's model empowers disadvantaged communities through a village-based, mobile, vocational training initiative, addressing critical challenges such as banditry, drug abuse, and limited educational opportunities.

Dr. Esther Thaara Muoria,
The Principal Secretary of the State Department for TVET in the Ministry of Education

Ujuzi Manyattani Programme Crosses 5-year Mark, Graduates 222 Youth

The 19th of June ushered in a new era of opportunity for 222 young men and women from Mayianat, Shulmai, Lekurruki, Kirimon, Il Ngwesi, and Sera Community Conservancies, as they graduated from Ujuzi Manyattani Programme, in a ceremony that also commemorated the Programme's fifth anniversary.

Upon completing vocational training through Ujuzi Manyattani, the trainees were assessed using RPL. The graduates, who had enrolled for various courses in the Programme, including catering, hairdressing, tailoring, plumbing, motorbike repair, electrical and solar installation, and mobile phone repair, were awarded level 3 and 4 certificates by the Nyeri National Polytechnic. Start-up toolkits were also issued to the graduates, ensuring they were fully equipped to start their own businesses.

The British High Commissioner to Kenya, Neil Wigan, graced the event, which was held at Kiwanja Ndege Town in Mayianat Community Conservancy. Other notable guests in attendance included the State Department for Wildlife Principal Secretary, Silvia Museiya, the State Department for Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and Regional Development Principal Secretary, Dr. Kello Harsama, the Deputy Director of Technical Education at the State Department for Vocational and Technical Training, Joseph Kanyi, Laikipia North Member of Parliament, Sarah Korere, and Laikipia County Deputy Governor, Reuben Kamuri. Teams from our donors and partners, including USAID, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Basecamp Explorer Foundation, Fauna & Flora, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), and the German Agency for International Cooperation, were also present.



We hope that the skills you have learnt in Ujuzi Manyattani will help your families and communities, and that you will be role models and encourage other people to learn the same skills and get the same opportunities.

Neil Wigan,
British High Commissioner to Kenya





Local Works, a 3-year project implemented by MashinaniWORKS, came to a close in June 2024, and played a vital role in supporting locally owned and managed development initiatives. These efforts resulted in the empowerment of 10,892 vulnerable women and youth. [Watch this film](#) to learn how Local Works, funded by USAID, transformed lives across the NRT landscape.

Joy, Celebration in Community Conservancies, as **140 Youth Graduate** from Ujuzi Manyattani

For 140 youth from Garbatulla, Kinna, and Melako Community Conservancies in Isiolo and Marsabit Counties, 2024 ended on a high, as they graduated from Ujuzi Manyattani after undergoing three months of intensive vocational training.

The youth, who were delighted to have achieved this momentous milestone, had enrolled for training in various courses including catering, mobile phone repair, hairdressing and beauty therapy, tailoring and dressmaking, masonry and motorbike repair. All the courses were strategically designed to address the unique needs of the youth's communities.

To ensure the trainees not only mastered the required skills but also met national standards, each one was assessed and certified through RPL. This nationally-recognised certification validated the trainees' practical expertise and formalised their skills, increasing their employability. Each graduate was also issued a start-up toolkit relevant to their trade, ensuring operational readiness so they could begin their entrepreneurial journey or join the formal workforce without delay. By removing barriers to career progression, including the challenge of limited capital, Ujuzi Manyattani enabled the trainees to successfully transition to self-sustenance and financial independence.



The conservancy-based graduation ceremonies inspired other community members to seize similar opportunities, and embodied ways local skills development could transform entire regions.

Local leaders, government officials, and conservancy staff graced the events, and commended the graduates for their efforts, as well as the vital role they play in driving socio-economic growth.

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I pursued electrical and solar installation because I believe passion has no boundaries, and women can excel in fields often seen as men's. The free training and the tools provided have given me a head start, and enabled me to earn a decent income and break stereotypes in my community.

Rukia Hussein,
Ujuzi Manyattani graduate, Kinna Conservancy

Ujuzi Manyattani Shines at National TVET Centenary Celebrations



'If education is the key to employability, then TVET is the master key,' was the powerful theme at the national TVET centenary celebrations held at Kabete National Polytechnic in July 2024.

The ceremony, officially launched by the Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, H.E. Musalia Mudavadi, converged key stakeholders in the TVET sector, under a shared vision: position TVET to meet labor market demands and promote lifelong learning and decent work opportunities.

During the event, MashinaniWORKS, led by Board Chairperson, Dr. Kevit Desai, hosted the President of Kenya, H.E. Dr. William Ruto, and the State Department for TVET Principal Secretary, Dr. Esther Muoria, at Ujuzi Manyattani Programme's booth. The President, who was the Chief Guest, expressed keen interest in the Programme, which seeks to advance vocational skills training in the country by advocating for policy formulation and the development of alternative TVET pathways.

At the centenary celebrations, Ujuzi Manyattani was a marvel, with its features garnering the attention of many. Programme beneficiaries, bustling with warmth and energy, and adorned in striking traditional regalia, brought a unique cultural style to the modern event, while proudly representing their pastoralist heritage. At the Ujuzi Manyattani booth, they enthusiastically interacted with visitors and offered glimpses into the vocational skills they had acquired through the Programme. The event provided a great platform for them to connect with industry leaders, explore potential collaborations, pursue further professional development, and expand their networks within their respective fields.

Ujuzi Manyattani's presence at the TVET centenary celebrations highlighted the importance of its collaboration with technical institutions such as Kiirua Technical Training Institute, Laikipia North Technical and Vocational College, and Nyeri National Polytechnic. Through these partnerships, the Programme has been able to conduct vocational training in remote villages, providing youth with the skills they need to thrive in today's job market, without disrupting their way of life.





Creating Alternative TVET Pathways in ASALs: Ujuzi Manyattani Leads the Way

The State Department of TVET organised a workshop themed, 'Alternative Pathways for Skilling for Peace and Prosperity in Fragile and Vulnerable Contexts.' The four-day workshop targeted TVET administrators, including principals and registrars from TVET institutions.

The workshop aimed at developing a shared understanding of inclusive education (in which indigenous knowledge is incorporated), and highlighted the need for flexible, fit-for-purpose courses, context-specific curricula, and teaching methods that address local challenges and realities.

MashinaniWORKS' Chief Economic Programmes Officer, Ture Boru, served as Ujuzi Manyattani Programme's representative and keynote speaker at the workshop, which focused on developing strategies for integrating alternative pathways into the TVET system, while considering the unique needs of fragile and conflict-prone regions.

Ujuzi Manyattani is recognised as a model for informing the formulation of alternative TVET policies that address the needs of the vulnerable in communities. Through its mobile, market-driven skills trainings that are tailored to the unique needs of women and youth from marginalised communities, Ujuzi Manyattani is bridging gaps in traditional education systems. Further, the Programme is fostering economic resilience and contributing to peacebuilding by creating new sustainable livelihoods.



Ujuzi Manyattani Curriculum Review

In line with its commitment to keep pace with emerging opportunities as well as the evolving training needs of programme participants, every year, the Ujuzi Manyattani Programme collaborates with partnering TVET institutions to conduct a comprehensive review of its curriculum.

On the 10th of May, Ujuzi Manyattani convened a meeting that brought together heads of departments and trainers of partnering TVET institutions teaching various courses, including catering, hairdressing and beauty therapy, motorbike and mobile phone repair, plumbing, masonry, electrical and solar installation, and tailoring and dressmaking.

During the meeting, the current curriculum was reviewed and aligned with the RPL policy and occupational standards of the Nyeri National Polytechnic. Additionally, discussions were held on the development of training materials for the revised curriculum and ways to enhance the Ujuzi Manyattani model. The feasibility of

adding new courses to the Programme was also explored.

The partners shared insights on the challenges encountered and proposed solutions to address them. They also highlighted the need to incorporate emerging trends and technologies in vocational training delivery, equip the trainees with relevant skills for the job market, improve training quality, and forge new partnerships with industry leaders to increase the employability of Ujuzi Manyattani graduates.

The curriculum review enhanced Ujuzi Manyattani's courses, ensuring the Programme remains an effective tool for empowering women and youth and providing training in sustainable, in-demand skills.

Ujuzi Manyattani remains committed to refining its trainings through ongoing partnerships with TVET institutions and industry leaders, and supporting trainees on their journey to self-reliance and economic independence.



Safe Water for All: How Ujuzi Manyattani is Making Waves and Addressing Water Scarcity

Communities in northern Kenya face a rising demand for sustainable water management due to continued population growth. As settlements expand, the pressure on existing water infrastructure increases, leading to inefficiencies and system failures.

Recognising this challenge, NRT, in partnership with MashinaniWORKS, developed a groundbreaking intervention—the integration of technical skills training into water sustainability strategies, enabling local maintenance, repair, and optimisation of water infrastructure, and continued access to water supply.

Under the Ujuzi Manyattani training model, 33 youth and women from 19 NRT member community conservancies were enrolled at Kiirua Technical Training Institute as the first-ever cohort to undergo training focused on improving water access. The three-month training has increased the trainees' knowledge of plumbing and equip them with electrical and solar installation skills.

The goal is to empower the trainees to improve water supply in their communities through training. With their newfound skills, they will be able to respond to emerging needs and contribute to the continued functionality and sustainability of water systems in their conservancies.



World Youth Skills Day: Investing in the Next Generation through Ujuzi Manyattani

On the 15th of July, we joined in the global celebration of World Youth Skills Day (WYSD), and shone the spotlight on the pivotal role that skills development plays in addressing youth unemployment and promoting sustainable peace.

2024's WYSD theme, "Youth Skills for Peace and Development," emphasised the importance of equipping young people with the tools they need to build resilient futures.

WYSD aligns with MashinaniWORKS' mission, and particularly our flagship programme's, Ujuzi Manyattani. Northern Kenya faces significant challenges, including high unemployment rates, limited access to education, and social unrest driven by poverty and resource scarcity. Ujuzi Manyattani is designed to address these issues by empowering youth with market-oriented skills while promoting peace and stability.

As part of our WYSD celebrations, we engaged in a live session on Angaaf Radio, which featured a beneficiary of Ujuzi Manyattani's motorbike repair course. Discussions during the session highlighted the Programme's positive impact, including the creation of job opportunities for young people.

The conversation also underscored Ujuzi Manyattani's role in fostering lasting peace. By providing a platform for youth to acquire vocational skills and earn an income, Ujuzi Manyattani is driving poverty reduction and addressing one of the root causes of conflict in northern Kenya.

Defying Gravity: How Ujuzi Manyattani Transformed a Young Man's Life

Born into a Turkana family in a remote village in northern Kenya's Isiolo County, Jonathan Nawapa's early life was shaped by financial crisis.

In a desperate attempt to improve their circumstances, Jonathan's family relocated to the outskirts of Isiolo Town. However, escalating living costs and the difficulties of adjusting to a new environment compelled Jonathan's parents to make tough decisions, including the cessation of Jonathan's education. Consequently, he withdrew from school after completing Grade 7.

Ever since he was a little boy, Jonathan had been fascinated by the art of fixing things. Now that he had plenty of free time, he spent countless hours working beside his uncle, who often repaired household equipment such as radios, and learnt by observing each step.

As fate would have it, Jonathan's uncle passed away and he felt the loss deeply. Death had robbed him of a mentor. Despite his devastation, Jonathan followed in the footsteps of his uncle, and began repairing small gadgets in the house, including watches and radios. Having no access to electricity, he adopted his uncle's improvisational techniques. He would

heat a five-cent coin on a charcoal stove, then use the coin as a makeshift soldering tool for connecting wires. His ingenuity did not go unnoticed. Over time, the community began to turn to him for assistance fixing broken equipment.

After turning 20, Jonathan sought ways to learn the intricacies of equipment repair and lift his family out of poverty. In Isiolo Town, he met an experienced technician who took him under his wing as an apprentice for five years. During this period, he learnt to repair a variety of home appliances. His interest piqued, he dreamed of expanding his skillset to include mobile phone repair.

Jonathan's big break came when a Leparua Community Conservancy board member noticed his dedication and informed him of the ICEP-funded Ujuzi Manyattani vocational training programme. Without hesitation, Jonathan enrolled in the mobile phone repair and maintenance course. The next three months were life-changing for him, as he learned essential repair techniques from a professional TVET trainer.

On the 13th of February, 140 trainees graduated from Ujuzi Manyattani, and Jonathan was one of them. Like the other graduates,

Jonathan was issued with a certificate and a start-up toolkit, enabling him to establish a business right after graduation. Soon after, he joined a Village Savings and Loans Association and borrowed Ksh 30,000 (USD 232.55) to rent a small workshop and purchase additional tools.

Today, Jonathan's shop is a bustling hub of electronic repairs, attracting nearby clients as well as those from neighboring Samburu and Marsabit Counties, who send in their devices via bus. He makes at least Ksh 3,000 daily (USD 23.25) and up to Ksh 10,000 (USD 77.51) for complex repairs such as fixing television screens.

Jonathan shares his workshop with a business partner. Their combined expertise enables them to expand their service offering, which ranges from phone, thermostat, coil, cable, and kettle fuse repair, to fixing television backlights, motherboards, power supplies and screens.

Jonathan envisions stocking the workshop with spare parts to reduce costs, and training youth in his community. He aspires to create opportunities for others like him to learn profitable skills, so they too can improve their livelihoods, just as he has.





Biashara Mashinani Programme

Across the ASALs of Kenya, Biashara Mashinani, a multifaceted business and skills development programme, has been providing youth and women with the training and financial services they need to start businesses so they can diversify their income and improve their livelihoods.

The Programme empowers participating youth and women to capitalise on existing and emerging economic opportunities in the landscape, fostering self-reliance and enabling them to contribute to the growth of the local economy. Biashara Mashinani accomplishes this through:

→ **Community engagement and empowerment**

The Programme encourages community ownership by engaging communities in the design and implementation of economic initiatives tailored to address their needs.

→ **Bespoke training and capacity building**

Biashara Mashinani, through its financial literacy and business training, provides participants with the knowledge, skills and tools required to establish and manage successful enterprises. The Programme's curriculum covers a range of topics, including business idea generation, life skills, business planning, business improvement, and business expansion.

→ **Ongoing support and mentorship**

Enterprise Development Officers mentor Biashara Mashinani graduates and provide ongoing support.



→ **Access to financial services**

Biashara Mashinani facilitates access to loans and savings through Rangelands SACCO. These services enable entrepreneurs and small business owners to overcome financial barriers and launch or grow their businesses.

→ **Partnership and collaboration**

The Programme forges strategic partnerships with government agencies, civil society organisations, and the private sector, to develop resources that improve innovation, efficiency and sustainability.

The success of enterprises is dependent on the provision of custom-made business solutions and trainings that address the needs of entrepreneurs at different stages of growth.

In 2024, Biashara Mashinani made significant strides in scaling up its vocational training, enterprise development, and financial inclusion initiatives, bolstering community resilience in the face of climate catastrophe and extreme weather events. Additionally, 942 women and youth received training in various facets of business set up and management.

Village Enterprise Volunteers were also recruited and trained, who provided impactful financial services to communities in 10 conservancies, further improving access to economic opportunities.

In 2024, Biashara Mashinani, through its capacity building initiatives, disbursed a total of Ksh 24.4 million (USD 189,147.28) to 300 women- and youth-led enterprises, facilitating business start-up and expansion. Additionally, Rangelands SACCO has disbursed Ksh 235 million (USD 1.82 million) in loans to 5,817 businesses since its inception, further enabling growth in entrepreneurship in target communities.

For indigenous communities across the NRT landscape, Biashara Mashinani's interventions are a lifeline that has not only improved their incomes, but also injected Ksh 1.6 billion (USD 12.40 million) into the local economy.

Building the Capacity of Tomorrow's Entrepreneurs through Biashara Mashinani

The Biashara Mashinani Programme has made significant progress in empowering youth in Kenya's ASALs by providing life skills, entrepreneurship and financial literacy training. The Programme seeks to enhance trainees' ability to transform their newly acquired skills into businesses, enabling them to develop innovative business ideas, make informed decisions and cultivate self-reliance.

In 2024, Biashara Mashinani trained 564 Ujuzi Manyattani participants on a range of topics including self-awareness, business idea generation, business plan development, marketing strategies, budgeting, and savings. This initiative created jobs, reduced unemployment rates, improved living standards, and increased the stability of marginalised communities that grapple with limited opportunities, among other economic challenges.

Developing the Capacity of Conservancy Entrepreneurs

In 2021, Biashara Mashinani, supported by USAID's Local Works Programme, launched a module-based business training, designed to support existing start-ups and entrepreneurs in community conservancies in their entrepreneurship journey. The training enabled entrepreneurs to overcome business challenges and seize emerging opportunities.

During the last phase of training, the Biashara Mashinani team conducted a business expansion training for 378 entrepreneurs with existing businesses in 10 Community Conservancies, namely, Naibunga Lower, Meibae, Ltungai, Ruko, Ishaqbini, Oldonyiro, Pate, Shurr, Masol, and Biliqo Bulesa. The training provided valuable insights into key business practices, and covered a range of topics including strategic growth and marketing, effective stock control, and personal branding. By covering these diverse yet interconnected elements, the training empowered participants to make informed decisions that drive sustainable growth and long-term success.

Particular emphasis was placed on stock control and personal branding. During the stock control session, trainees were taught effective inventory management and financial risk reduction strategies, improving their profitability, while the personal branding session encouraged market differentiation, and underscored the importance of creating a unique professional identity that customers resonate with.

By training existing start-ups and entrepreneurs, Biashara Mashinani strengthened local businesses, boosting sales and enhancing customer loyalty through authentic branding and consistent marketing efforts.

To measure the effectiveness of the Programme, in 2024, an endline survey was conducted that compared pre-intervention and post-intervention data of the business training and capacity-building sessions provided to the selected beneficiaries.

The survey revealed that 99% of businesses across the 10 participating community conservancies survived the 2022-2023 drought and continue to operate effectively, generating an average monthly income of Ksh 23,811 (USD 184.58) against the baseline income of Ksh 5,100 (USD 39.53).





A business expansion training conducted in 10 NRT member community conservancies, led to 99.9% of conservancy start-ups achieving an average monthly income of Ksh 23,811 (USD 184.58), up from the baseline income of Ksh 5,100 (USD 39.53).

Enhancing the Camel Milk Value Chain

For centuries, camel milk has been a staple in various cultures, particularly in ASALs, where camels are raised as livestock.

Known for its nutritional value, and rich in nutrients and compounds, camel milk offers numerous health benefits, including enhanced immune function. Despite its usefulness, the camel milk value chain faces significant challenges, including inefficiencies in production, processing, and market access, which hinder its potential impact and growth.

In West Gate Community Conservancy's Naisunyai Zone, residents heavily rely on camels for their livelihood. Many locals are traditionally nomads or semi-nomads, and regularly move in search of pasture and water, making camels ideal for this lifestyle, due to their resilience in extreme conditions, and ability to carry heavy loads and travel long distances without frequent hydration. Additionally, these unique characteristics make camels indispensable for milk production.

Women and youth in Naisunyai Zone used camel milk for domestic purposes only, until recently, when Biashara Mashinani, in collaboration with Samburu County Government's Department of Livestock Production, trained community members on camel milk marketing, health, nutrition, disease management, balanced feeding, selective breeding, disease prevention, and sustainable practices such as rotational grazing.





The training aimed at increasing milk production, enhancing overall productivity, and strengthening the camel milk value chain, laying the groundwork for creating sustainable livelihoods.

Following the training in June 2024, camel farmers in Naisunyai Zone saw a 33% increase in milk production and collected an average of 120 litres daily, up from 90 litres. They transported the milk to Isiolo Town, where it sold for between Ksh 80 (USD 0.62) and Ksh 90 (USD 0.69) per litre, generating Ksh 597,630 (USD 4,632.79) in sales.

This achievement led the group, comprising 30 camel milk farmers, to be officially recognised under the Cooperative Societies as Naisunyai Livestock Cooperative Society Limited.

Collectively, these capacity building initiatives have expanded the camel value chain and promoted sustainable agricultural practices, enabling local camel farmers to contribute significantly to food security and local economic development. Thanks to the initiatives, as well as the camel's unique adaptations and the diverse range of products it offers, camel milk farming is poised to become a cornerstone of agriculture in West Gate Community Conservancy, improving both economic stability and food security.



33%

increase in camel milk production, following the training of camel farmers in West Gate Community Conservancy by Biashara Mashinani.

Unlocking the Potential of the **Camel Milk Economy in ASALs**

Dawn breaks over the hills of Naisunyai Village in West Gate Community Conservancy, Samburu County. It is 5:30 a.m. The stillness of the morning is broken by the crowing of a rooster and the rustling sound of camels stirring.

The *manyattas* (huts) are silhouetted against the brightening sky as Ltemula Lekumoisa emerges from one of them, carrying a bucket of water. The crisp morning air greets him as he walks towards the camel kraal. He finds some of his camels standing tall on their long legs, while others continue to lie down, calmly chewing cud.

Lekumoisa pauses and surveys the herd before approaching one of his Somali camels. The breed is known for its high milk yield. Securing the camel's leg with a rope, Lekumoisa places the bucket beneath its udder and begins milking. The rhythmic swishing sound of milk accumulating in the bucket follows. One of his wives who has now joined him stands by, holding a sieve and a container, ready to collect the milk. His children also pitch in, and help by steadying the nearby milk containers and handing over their lids.

As the sun rises, casting a golden glow over the land, the milking continues, until all the containers are filled to the brim and neatly lined up. Lekumoisa loads each one onto his motorbike, and at 7 a.m. carefully rides to the aggregation point, where other camel farmers have gathered under the shade of a tree with their milk-filled yellow jerry-cans. The milk is measured and the quantity each farmer has delivered is recorded. At 8.30 a.m. Lekumoisa completes the process. He must now ride 3 kilometres along the main road, to the collection point, to deliver the milk. Time is of the essence. Any delay could result in milk spoilage, turning the morning's hard work into a loss. At the collection point, the milk is loaded onto a bus and transported to Isiolo Town for sale.



Before venturing into camel milk production, Lekumoisa relied solely on livestock production and a small shop, which he continues to run after his morning milk deliveries. In addition to being a camel milk farmer, Lekumoisa, who is 41 years old, also serves as the chair of Naisunyai Livestock Cooperative Society, where he represents 29 other farmers who began selling camel milk together in June.

His camel farming journey began in childhood, but practices have since evolved. By raising Somali and Turkana breeds, he produces nearly 13 litres of milk daily and



sells each for Ksh 90 (USD 0.69). This income sustains his household of six children and three wives, and covers basic needs, school fees, and emergencies.

Camel milk production comes with its own challenges, including pest infestations, disease outbreaks, and delays in milk delivery caused by mechanical issues or vehicle shortages. Climate change, with its unpredictable weather patterns, exacerbates the situation, complicating grazing.

Lekumoisa chooses to focus on the solutions rather than the prevailing issues. He continues to advocate for the purchase of a designated vehicle for efficient milk transportation, as well as a cooling machine to facilitate milk storage. This would enable each farmer to milk multiple times a day, potentially tripling production to as much as 39 litres daily.

Lekumoisa is grateful for the camel milk production training that he and the other camel farmers in the Society received from the Biashara Mashinani Programme. He elucidates, "I gained knowledge I did not have before. I learnt about rotational grazing, and how to improve the health of camels through balanced feeding. Now I can identify early signs of disease in my camels." Thanks to the training, Lekumoisa and his fellow camel farmers have adopted better rearing practices and practise selective breeding. They graze their herds in lush pasture, especially during rainy seasons, and closely monitor their health. These efforts have significantly improved their camel milk quality and yield, increasing their competitive edge.

Though he also rears cattle, goats, and sheep, Lekumoisa believes camels are unmatched. "Camels are resilient, low-maintenance, and feed on a wide variety of plants, making them ideal for our semi-arid environment."

For Lekumoisa, camel farming is more than a source of livelihood. It is a legacy that offers both sustenance and hope to his family and community.





Rangelands SACCO

Access to capital and financial services is essential for economic development, and its absence stymies growth.

Traditionally, the remoteness and the low cash requirements of northern Kenya's pastoralist communities meant that few, if any, formal financial institutions existed in the region, especially in villages. For banks, doing business in region was too expensive and risky. Individuals and small businesses had to satisfy their need for cash, savings and loans locally and informally.

Rangelands Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisation (Rangelands SACCO) was founded in 2016 as an independent, community-owned, member-driven institution. The SACCO collaborates with NRT member community conservancies to administer savings and microcredit loans. It has become a catalyst for grassroots development in remote areas where financial institutions are not easily accessible.

Rangelands SACCO remains committed to promoting financial inclusion and driving the growth of local economies by empowering community members in marginalised areas. The SACCO achieved the following milestones in 2024:

- **301** new members joined.
- The SACCO had a total of **6,331** active members.
- **Ksh 52.2 million (USD 404,651.16)** in savings and shares was collectively accrued by members.
- **Ksh 24.4 million (USD 189,147.28)** in loans was disbursed to 300 beneficiaries. To date, a total of Ksh 235 million (USD 1.82 million) has been disbursed in loans to 5,817 members, financing start-ups and business expansion.
- A total of **Ksh 17.6 million (USD 136,434.10)** in loans was repaid, bringing the overall loan repayment status to Ksh 130 million (USD 1.00 million).



Rangelands SACCO Hosts Annual Delegates' Meeting, Distributes Dividends

On the 7th of March, 50 delegates from NRT member community conservancies across 9 counties convened at Rangelands SACCO's Annual Delegates Meeting (ADM), to review the SACCO's performance and make plans for its future.

During the Meeting, the SACCO distributed dividends worth Ksh 2.6 million (USD 20,155.03), a 57.6% increase from the Ksh 1.65 million (USD 12,790.69) disbursed in 2022.

Presentations were also made on the SACCO's operations and member engagement initiatives. Its strong 2024 performance and sound financial health was attributed to prudent management practices and consistent growth in savings and investments.

During the ADM, delegates actively participated in discussions, and provided valuable feedback and recommendations for enhancing SACCO operations. Elections were also held, and new committee members voted in to represent members' interests and steer the SACCO to greater success. The SACCO also recognised its members, Namunken Napolok, Sameti Lesantanguny, and Pauline Lolngojine, for retaining their positions as Best Female Saver, Best Youth Saver, and Best Borrower, respectively, of the 2023 financial year. Regarding SACCO-related activities at the conservancy level, Kiunga Community Conservancy emerged as the Best Performing Conservancy out of the 39 in which Rangelands SACCO operates. In 2024, Kiunga led in loan repayment, contributing Ksh 2.6 million (USD 20,155.03) out of the overall Ksh 17.6 million (USD 136,434.10) repaid by SACCO borrowers.



In 2024, Rangelands SACCO dividends rose to Ksh 2.6 million (USD 20,155.03), a 57.6% increase from Ksh 1.65 million (USD 12,790.69) in 2022.



Kiunga Community Conservancy led NRT member conservancies in loan repayment, contributing Ksh 2.6 million (USD 20,155.03) of the Ksh 17.6 million (USD 136,434.10) Rangelands SACCO borrowers repaid in 2024.

Boda Boda Microcredit Fund: Empowering Youth, Transforming Lives in Kenya's ASALs

The *boda boda* (motorbike taxi) industry in Kenya is a significant part of the country's transport sector, providing essential mobility for millions in both rural and urban areas. *Boda bodas* are popular because they can navigate rough terrains, congested areas, and locations where other vehicles might not be able to.

According to a World Bank report, the *boda boda* industry employs an estimated 1.5 million people and generates approximately Ksh 202 billion (USD 1.56 billion) annually, accounting for 3.4% of Kenya's gross domestic product.

Asset-based loans for motorbikes allow individuals to acquire motorbikes over time and eventually own them entirely, making motorbike ownership possible for low-income earners who might otherwise struggle to access financing. Thus, the loans enable young men and women to engage in the popular *boda boda* business.

In 2019, Rangelands SACCO launched the *Boda Boda* Microcredit Fund to provide marginalised youth from NRT member community conservancies with a sustainable source of income, in order to combat drug abuse and reduce unemployment, among other socioeconomic challenges.

Before loan issuance, fund beneficiaries undertake a bespoke entrepreneurship and financial literacy training, equipping them with critical business management skills so they can make informed financial decisions. The training also includes modules on road safety, ensuring the youth have the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate roads responsibly and safely.

In 2024, with support from the French Development Agency (AFD), European Union, and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), 50 youth from Shurr, Masol, and Lower Tana Delta Community Conservancies were issued motorbikes worth Ksh 8.1 million (USD 62,790.69), through asset-based loans.

For the youth, the motorbikes have become a viable tool for generating a sustainable income and creating a path to stable employment. By operating *boda boda* businesses, their financial situation has not only improved their financial situation, but also, they have been steered away from delinquency.

Since its inception, the *Boda Boda* Microcredit Fund has benefitted 256 women and youth from 12 NRT member community conservancies, enabling them to support themselves and their families and contribute positively to the broader community.



Village Enterprise Volunteers

In response to the growing need for accessible financial services, economic empowerment at the grassroots level, and a self-sustaining support network, Rangelands SACCO recruited Village Enterprise Volunteers (VEVs) in 10 NRT member community conservancies.

Each conservancy's VEVs team comprises the area chief, area board member, and three SACCO members with strong credit scores. The VEVs are responsible for overseeing the SACCO's legislative processes, identifying eligible borrowers, and registering new members and groups.

Upon their recruitment, the VEVs underwent a training that enabled them to effectively support Rangelands SACCO's operations and accurately fill SACCO admission and loan forms, ensuring an efficient loan issuance process. The VEV role was also clarified, with emphasis placed on guiding community members through SACCO services, promoting financial literacy, and serving as key points of contact for member support. Further, the VEVs were trained on the beneficiary selection criteria and process so they could make fair, well-informed decisions that align with community priorities and SACCO's objectives.

A critical aspect of the VEVs' training was a module on loan recovery strategies, which explored methods for managing and recovering long-standing debts, to maintain the SACCO's financial stability.

The existence of trained VEVs has increased community trust and confidence in SACCO operations, promoted financial inclusion, and boosted members' confidence in borrowing and managing their loans.

Through VEVs, Rangelands SACCO is creating a framework for sustainable development, which supports members in both adopting healthy financial practices and achieving long-term prosperity.



Rangelands Sacco: Harnessing Inclusion for Economic Development

At the age of 10, Alice Shakinei from Masol Community Conservancy in West Pokot County experienced a severe reaction in her right leg following a polio injection during a clinic visit.

Her family sought treatment from community herbalists, and after several failed attempts, took her back to hospital. Unfortunately for Alice, it was too late. She was left with a disability that physically restricted her in multiple ways. Determined to rise above her circumstances, Alice grew up to become an industrious lady who today runs her own petroleum business.

On a typical day, you will find her cheerfully filling up her jerry-cans with petroleum, ready to serve her customers. Before she established her business, Alice was a stay-at-home mother with no source of income, and was left to raise her children by herself after her husband left.

“At that moment, I knew that the children were looking up to me as their provider, so I decided to start selling petrol and diesel on people’s verandas. It took me two years before I secured a space.”

In 2019, Alice used a Ksh 25,000 (USD 193.79) loan from Rangelands SACCO to grow her business. As the sole fuel supplier in her area, which lacks a petrol station, the demand for her products and services has risen. On a good day, she makes up to Ksh 10,000 (USD 77.51) and on an average day, up to Ksh 6,000 (USD 46.51).

The business training Alice received from Bishara Mashinani played a crucial role in the expansion of her business. “I had the skills and a bit of knowledge, but what I was taught was not even close to half what I knew. Learning budgeting, proper business planning, re-

cord keeping, and time management helped me,” she explains.

Alice is not immune to the stigma associated with her condition. “People have said negative things about me, but at the end of the day, I know that I am the only one who can help my children and myself.” Additionally, Alice’s limited mobility causes her to lose customers sometimes as deliveries are unsuccessful or delayed.

These challenges would discourage many, but not Alice, now 37. She draws strength from knowing she has built a safe home for her three children and ensured they have access to education and other basic necessities. Alice aspires to own a petrol station and serve customers from all parts of the country. Her advice to young girls and women is, “Prioritise venturing into business, embrace everything that comes with it, and do not let anything stop you from achieving your goals.”





Ufugaji Bora Mashinani

Ufugaji Bora Mashinani (UBM) is a practical farmer field school that equips herders and women in villages with skills that enhance livestock productivity and market value. UBM collaborates with county government technical subject matter specialists in its operations and delivers impact through:

- **Programme design:** the UBM curriculum consists of six modules whose content and schedule are designed to reinforce lessons through practical experience, foster collaboration and partnership, and positively change behaviours.
- **Livestock value chain improvement:** UBM establishes livestock improvement and marketing groups (livestock marketing agents) in each participating community conservancy. The groups receive breeding, animal feeds and supplementary feeding, livestock marketing, climate adaptation and rangeland governance training and technology, enabling them to access market information in real time and work toward selling as a cooperative, increasing their competitive edge.
- **Improved animal health and value:** UBM trains participants in modern animal husbandry and links them to better agricultural supplies that are relatively more affordable. The Programme also supports trained individuals and registered groups in mobilising local herders and pooling resources for livestock vaccination. These groups actively advocate for vaccination and other animal health services. UBM also trains herders in supplemental feeding.
- **Improved rangelands:** UBM training leverages the best of modern and traditional grazing practices, strengthens local rangeland governance, and links livestock value chain improvement to rangeland restoration.



Community-led Livestock Management: Fostering Sustainability

The livestock team, as part of its efforts to scale up UBM, developed proposals that piqued several potential donors' interests, including the Livelihood Impact Fund, which financed an independent evaluation of UBM's activities. The evaluation revealed UBM's activities had led to transformative changes in pastoralist communities, driven by the strategic adoption of improved breeds, feed, and veterinary care.

Further, the evaluation's findings indicated that trainees, empowered by UBM through business associations and village leadership, are catalysing change and fostering economic resilience. By leveraging their newfound skills to generate profits, which are reinvested in small businesses, UBM trainees are fuelling the growth of local economies. Additionally, it was found that innovative community practices, such as pasture enclosure and rotation, have gained traction, promoting sustainable land use. Notably, pastoralists are increasingly opting for enhanced goat and camel breeds over traditional cattle, reflecting a shift in cultural preferences.

To ensure UBM's long-term sustainability, a multi-pronged approach will be employed that

includes securing government accreditation of UBM as a livestock value chain service provider, generating revenue by offering apprenticeship for value chain graduates, capacity building and training of service providers, and provision of consultancy services on livestock production and healthcare matters.

UBM will continue to build on the insights gained from its earlier iteration of its livestock farmer field schools, which resulted in the formation of vibrant cooperative groups at the community conservancy level. These groups and their local leaders have secured further support from other non-governmental organisations operating in the landscape. The groups have also implemented projects that promote fodder planning and increase access to markets, in addition to advocating for greater county government investment in the livestock sector. Strengthening and scaling the cooperative groups remains crucial for UBM's success, as the milestones they have achieved have not only increased their communities' climate resilience, but also contributed toward the reduction of resource-based conflict.



Joy as Ufugaji Bora Mashinani Programme Graduates 293 Herders

The 20th of March was a day of joyful celebration for 293 pastoralist herders as they graduated from the Ufugaji Bora Mashinani Programme.

The herders, drawn from 10 NRT member community conservancies across Isiolo, Marsabit, Samburu and Laikipia Counties, demonstrated exceptional dedication and resilience throughout the six-module training, which aimed at strengthening the livestock value chain and increasing household income.

The topics covered during the practical training included livestock breeding, feeding, animal health, marketing, climate change adaptation, leadership, and governance, and equipped the herders with vital livestock management and production skills.

During the ceremony, the graduating herders shared how the Programme had increased their productivity and improved their animal husbandry practices, enabling them to earn higher incomes and provide for their families.

An endline survey of Ufugaji Bora Mashinani revealed that 82% of programme beneficiaries now practise enhanced livestock husbandry. Additionally, according to the survey, beneficiaries' adoption of good livestock management practices rose from 12% at baseline to 33%, a notable increase.

Further, an impressive 92% of the herders credited the Ufugaji Bora Mashinani Programme for shifting their mindset toward commercial animal feeds and minerals, and supplementing traditional grazing practices, which has improved their livestock's health and productivity.



Collaboration for Enhancement of Livestock Management in ASALs

UBM has garnered the attention of local and national stakeholders, and solidified MashinaniWORKS' position as a national leader in livestock management.

Resultantly, the livestock team was invited to participate in several multistakeholder events, ranging from workshops to policy validation sessions, and including Heifer International's Stakeholders' Forum for Natural Resources and Rangeland Management, and USAID-Livestock Marketing System's Livestock Stakeholders' Investment Conference.

Outlined below are other key events in which UBM participated in 2024:

- ▶ In April, the UBM team participated in a stakeholder engagement and technical validation workshop whose focus was the Draft Livestock Quarantine Guidelines. The workshop was held at the Dairy Training Institute in Navasha.

Livestock quarantines are vital for strengthening and increasing compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary measures for livestock and livestock products. Additionally, they promote safe trade with an appropriate level of protection, as stipulated by the World Organisation for Animal Health.

At the workshop, the UBM team shared insights that guided the validation of the guidelines and cultivated relationships with other stakeholders, to help create markets and export opportunities for herders' livestock.
- ▶ The UBM team visited Marsabit County and met with Jaldesa Community Conservancy's UBM team as well as a team from the Kenya Livestock Commercialisation Project (KeLCoP).

During the meeting, the KeLCoP team named UBM as one of the five programmes that had been selected to participate in KeLCoP's activities, aimed at enhancing the livestock value chain in Saku Constituency. Resultantly, UBM's participants will benefit from KeLCoP's dairy goat rearing initiatives.
- ▶ On the 6th of May, the UBM team, among others, was invited to review the 2024 Draft Veterinary Practice and Veterinary Medicine Bill. Developed by the State Department for Livestock Development in collaboration with key stakeholders, the Bill was formulated to address the modern challenges the animal resource industry grapples with. The review meeting aimed at aligning the Bill with current laws, following the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, and subsequent amendments of key policies.

The UBM team's involvement in the review was vital as effective delivery of veterinary services ensures good animal and human health, increases food and nutrition security, safeguards animal resource-based livelihoods and generates income for pastoral communities. Additionally, quality veterinary services enhance animal resource production and productivity, strengthen the commercialisation of animal resources, ensure access to animal resource product markets as well as efficient use of veterinary drugs and vaccines, and improve the resilience of pastoral communities.
- ▶ MashinaniWORKS' Livestock Director, Dr. Wario Sake, participated in a panel discussion on livestock value chain financing in dryland areas, at Mercy Corps' 2024 AgriFin Learning Event. During the session, he shared insights on optimising existing policies to better support pastoralists, and offered guidance on increasing pastoralists' participation in the process.

A New Dawn: Ufugaji Bora Mashinani Radically Transforms a Herder's Life

Loimap Lekula's education journey was cut short in grade 6.

Perennial drought in Sasaab Village, Samburu County, where he lived with his parents, forced the now 29-year-old father of four and devoted husband, to instead take care of his family's livestock.

For many years after he dropped out of school, Lekula's days revolved around herding and grazing his family's livestock across the vast northern Kenya rangelands. Often, he would trek long distances in search of pasture, while protecting the animals from harsh conditions and predators.

This was his routine until 2021, when he learnt about the Ufugaji Bora Mashinani Programme, run by MashinaniWORKS through West Gate Community Conservancy. Lekula decided to enroll, alongside 299 other herders.

The Programme's first training session covered livestock breeding and quickly became his favorite, as he learnt how to improve his livestock's productivity through selective breeding. Inspired by this knowledge, Lekula purchased a Galla she-goat, a breed renowned for its superior quality. This decision increased Lekula's milk production, and improved his family's nutritional health, instilling in him a sense of pride he had never experienced before.

The training also deepened Lekula's understanding of climate change—a major challenge for pastoralists in northern Kenya. He learnt adaptation strategies, including ways to preserve feed



and breed more resilient livestock. Having previously lost nearly all his cattle to drought, Lekula, who currently owns 20 goats and two cows, felt more prepared than ever to face the prolonged dry seasons that once decimated his herd.

“Not long ago, I had 20 cows and lost all but three to drought,” Lekula vividly recalls. “That huge loss taught me to adapt to our changing environment, and now I know how to prevent such losses.”

The Ufugaji Bora Mashinani Programme appointed Lekula as a Livestock Marketing Agent (LMA). To enable him to conduct his responsibilities, he was issued a solar-powered smart-phone through which he communicates and collects data. As an LMA, he disseminates information on market trends, the condition of grazing lands, and livestock health to other herders.

On the 20th of March, Lekula graduated alongside other herders at a spectacular ceremony held to celebrate their completion of three years of training. When he received his certificate, he saw more than a piece of paper. For him, the certificate symbolised the dawn of a new era—an opportunity to help his community, share the knowledge he had gained, and break the cycle of poverty that had held him back for so long. Lekula realised he no longer was just a herder. Now, he was a trained professional with the skills to make a real difference in West Gate Community Conservancy.

After his graduation, Lekula joined a 30-member self-help group in which he and his peers engage in various income-generating activities, including beading, selling livestock, and running small businesses. The group pools members’ earnings into a joint account, which creates a financial safety net that increases their resilience, and provides timely support during difficult times.

Beyond livestock farming and the self-help group’s activities, Lekula has ventured into poultry farming—a role traditionally perceived as reserved for women. Having begun with a modest flock, he now owns 55 chickens and regularly receives orders for eggs and meat. He reinvests the additional income in his goat herd, further increasing his financial stability.

Lekula envisions a future where every herder has a stable income and the skills to adapt to climate change, prevent losses, and secure fair livestock prices in the market. He strives to inspire the next generation and ensure that his children—and every child in his community—has access to nutritious food and better education.





Tourism

Northern Kenya is a region filled with scenic landscapes, rich cultures, and iconic wildlife species. A natural tourist destination, it has the potential to generate significant economic and societal benefits for its inhabitants.

Tourism in northern Kenya provides jobs and supports community development priorities such as education, healthcare, clean water, and infrastructure. Indigenous communities in the region are embracing responsible eco-tourism as a form of land use that is compatible with their way of life.

While northern Kenya is characterised by magnificent views, it is also ravaged by drought, insecurity and poverty. Consequently the tourism industry in the region is underdeveloped and underutilised, with investments concentrated in a handful of scattered tourist lodges and camps. After decades of work by NRT, community conservancy leadership, and MashinaniWORKS, the tide has begun to turn.

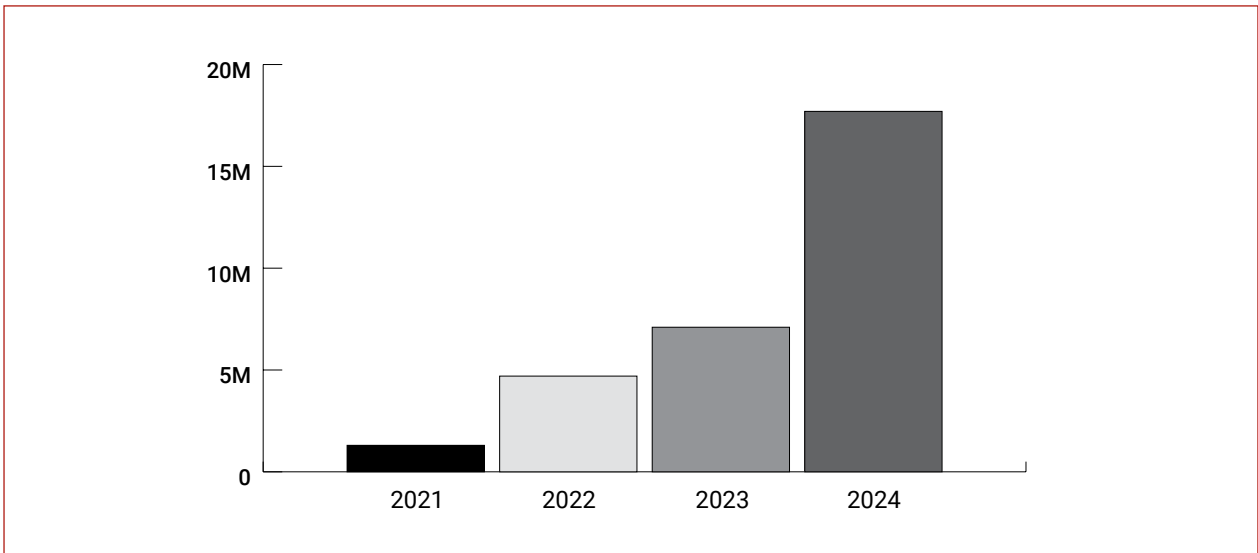
MashinaniWORKS uses its business expertise, connection to indigenous communities, and position as a skilled, neutral facilitator and advisor to accelerate the growth of tourism in northern Kenya, and delivers impact through:

- ▶ **The Big North Marketing Portal**
Development of the Big North website, which provides centralised booking access for all the properties. Other marketing efforts direct guests to tourism organisations and professional tour guides, raising awareness and enhancing their visibility.
- ▶ **Vocational and Business Training**
Training community members in skills required to operate a successful tourism business, including hospitality management, housekeeping and food and beverage service.
- ▶ **Business Advisory for Conservancies**
Provide business advice, enabling community conservancies to improve property management and product development, design properties, and optimise marketing strategies.
- ▶ **Community Partnerships**
Working with conservancy boards, resort management companies, donor organisations and government institutions to ensure that individual conservancy efforts are optimised for the benefit of the entire region.

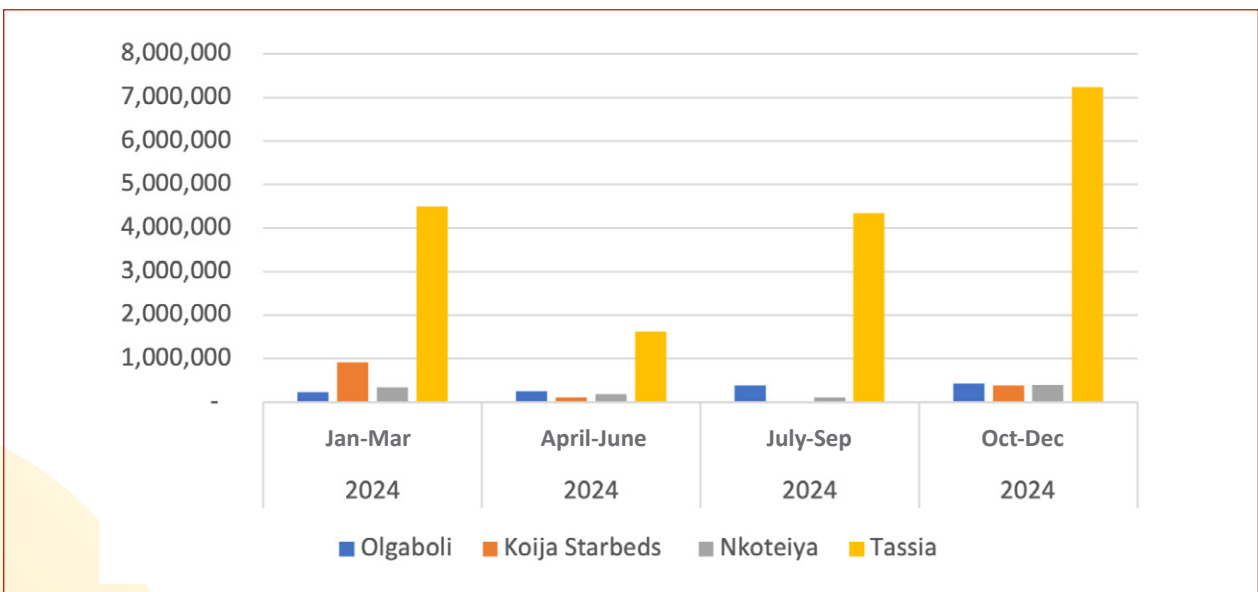
Tourism Performance Across the NRT Landscape

Amongst the four bandas (self-catering accommodation facilities) which receive guidance and support from MashinaniWORKS' tourism department, Tassia Lodge has registered the most growth, and its revenue has consistently been on an upward trend, rising from Ksh 1.3 million (USD 10,077.51) in 2021 to Ksh 4.7 million (USD 36,434.10) in 2022. In 2023, after continued tourism interventions, Tassia's revenue climbed to Ksh 7.1 million (USD 55,038.75) and then soared to Ksh 17.7 million (USD 137,209.30) in 2024, a remarkable 149% increase. Of this income, over Ksh 6 million (USD 46,511.62) supported conservancy operations and development, while Ksh 0.7 million (USD 5,426.35) funded community healthcare needs. Collectively, the four community bandas generated Ksh 21.4 million (USD 165,891.47) in revenue in 2024.

Tassia Lodge Revenue (2021-2024)



Banda Income for 2024



NRT Member Community Conservancies' Tourism Revenue (2024)

Conservancy	Revenue (Ksh)
Namunyak-Ngilai	525,000
Namunyak-Kalepo	6,003,371
Kalama	24,822,766
Ngare Ndare	7,323,100
West Gate	26,978,585
Lekurruki	17,683,641
Il Ngwesi	27,323,339
Sera	2,695,000
Nkoteiya	1,048,690
Naibunga Lower	2,720,297
Total	117,123,789

In March 2024, five youth (two male, three female) from Lekurruki Community Conservancy, completed a three-month on-the-job training in housekeeping, food and beverage service, and food preparation, at Kisimani Eco Resort. The training was made possible by a new partnership between MashinaniWORKS and Kisimani Eco Resort, in which the Resort provides a hands-on learning platform. Two of the youth secured employment at Tassia Lodge after their training.

In an effort to build local capacity, 69 youth and community leaders (including conservancy board members) from Songa, Biliqo Bulesa, Kinna, Leparua, Nasuulu, Nakuprat-Gotu, Nannapa, Nanapisho, Naapu, Narupa and Shurr Community Conservancies, underwent tour-

ism training. The tourism training spurred interest in tourism investments, with community conservancies in Isiolo County committing Ksh 27 million (USD 209,302.32) of their carbon funds to developing three tourism facilities in Nanapa, Narupa, and Biliqo Bulesa.

In Naibunga Lower Community Conservancy, Koija Starbeds and Olgaboli bandas disbursed bursaries worth Ksh 555,000 (USD 4,302.32) to 119 students, distributing Ksh 4,500 (USD 34.88) to each secondary school student and Ksh 10,000 (USD 77.51) to each tertiary college student.



Lodge Renovation and Expansion

From the 14th of April to the 1st of June, Koija Starbeds, Olgaboli, Nkoteiya, and Tassia Lodge were temporarily closed for renovation and expansion. The main tasks included sanding woodwork, reroofing, plumbing and electrical system inspections, and the set up of two guide tents at Tassia Lodge.



During this period, heavy rainfall caused the Ewaso Nyiro River to overflow, damaging access roads and lodge structures. This slowed down the ongoing renovations and expansion. Koija Starbeds was particularly impacted, with two rooms left exposed and unstable, reducing its operational capacity to two rooms. To increase occupancy, Koija Starbeds provided tents, as a stopgap measure. These challenges necessitate all stakeholders' support in maintaining and expanding tourism facilities, to grow northern Kenya's tourism sector.

The Big North Dazzles at Sarit Expo Centre's 2024 Holidays Tourism Fair

From the 28th of February to the 3rd of March, MashinaniWORKS' The Big North exhibited in Sarit Expo Centre's 2024 Holidays Tourism Fair, significantly boosting conservancy tourism marketing and amplifying brand visibility.

During the event, the team directly engaged with potential customers, promoting northern Kenya as a premier travel destination and an ideal vacation spot for the low season. These interactions generated sales worth Ksh 240,000 (USD 1,860.46) and resulted in the booking of Tassia Lodge for a wedding, a valuable addition to the Lodge's profile as it competes in new markets.

Drawing on insights gained from participating in the 2024 Magical Kenya Travel Expo, a brand-selling strategy was formulated to showcase northern Kenya's alluring nature through The Big North. The strategy included the use of printed brochures, roll-up banners, branded uniforms, and captivating screen displays, to create an inviting, informative visitor experience in The Big North exhibitions.

Resultantly, at the Holidays Tourism Fair, The Big North's booth attracted numerous visitors, and garnered praise for its exceptional design and brand messaging, securing an impressive 12th place ranking out of 78 stands.





Tourism **NewsBytes**

MashinaniWORKS Meets with Olgaboli Women's Group and Ilmotiok Group Ranch



MashinaniWORKS convened two separate meetings with the committees of Olgaboli Women's Group, which owns Olgaboli Lodge, located in Ilmotiok Group Ranch, Naibunga Lower Community Conservancy.

The first meeting focussed on inducting the Group's new committee members into their roles and familiarising them with Olgaboli Lodge's operations. Ensuring the newly-elected members had a clear understanding of their responsibilities was essential as it ensured the continued success of the Conservancy's tourism business.

Further, to address Olgaboli Lodge's operational challenges, MashinaniWORKS introduced Olgaboli Women's Group to a potential investor.

Since its establishment, Olgaboli Lodge has faced significant challenges in covering its operational costs. Therefore, MashinaniWORKS convened a second meeting, at which the Conservancy was advised to lease the Lodge to an operator. During the meeting, the importance of a transparent and fair process was emphasised, to facilitate competitive bidding and ensure the community gets the best possible deal. The leasing option reduces Naibunga Lower's direct involvement, while providing steady income for the community. Additionally, conservancy leadership was tasked with conducting comprehensive awareness sessions on the lodge lease process before advertising.

NRT East Chairpersons and Conservancy Managers Undergo Tourism Training



A double-booking incident at Bojidera campsite in Nakuprat-Gotu Community Conservancy resulted in negative client feedback and overcrowding at the site.

To prevent a reoccurrence, MashinaniWORKS collaborated with the NRT East office and conducted a training for the Region's chairpersons and conservancy managers. The training aimed at improving tourism operations and products. Further, training participants learnt how to make reservations using online spreadsheets, ensuring seamless shift handovers.

The training also highlighted opportunities for developing additional tourism facilities in community conservancies.

Nannapa, Nanapisho, Naapu and Narupa Community Conservancies' Boards Undergo Tourism Training



The Oldonyiro Conservancies' commitment towards tourism led MashinaniWORKS to conduct a training session attended by 53 conservancy board members. The training outlined the key factors to consider when identifying potential tourism sites, including the availability of wildlife, landscape appeal, area remoteness, and proximity to existing tourism routes.

The training also established a foundational framework for developing a tourism facility, and underscored the importance of aligning community expectations with operational requirements, before investing in a capital-intensive venture.

After the training, the conservancy board members compiled a list of potential tourism sites, for further assessment and selection by MashinaniWORKS' tourism department.

NRT East Community Conservancies Take Bold Steps to Invest in Tourism



Following the tourism training of NRT East's chairpersons and managers, the community conservancies in the Region developed a strong interest in establishing tourism facilities.

Narupa, Nannapa, and Biliqo-Bulesa allocated Ksh 6 million (USD 46,511.62), Ksh 7 million (USD 54,263.56), and Ksh 15 million (USD 116,279.06) respectively, for tourism development, prompting site assessment to identify potential sites for tourism facilities. The Babala area in Biliqo-Bulesa, Namarel in Nannapa, and Rumate in Narupa, were ultimately selected. The selection criteria included visual appeal, wildlife presence, remoteness, and accessibility.

Babala has been designated as a lodge, while Namarel and Rumate will initially be constructed as tented camps. With a lower initial investment, the tented camps offer a versatile starting point and can later be converted into full lodges. A phased approach will be adopted to develop these sites.

Nasuulu Community Conservancy Banda Construction Project Crosses Finish Line



In September 2024, through concerted efforts between NRT, MashinaniWORKS, and Nasuulu Community Conservancy, new bandas were constructed at the Conservancy and fully furnished. Subsequently, interviews were held, and a pool attendant, chef, and housekeeper were recruited to serve in the new bandas.

MashinaniWORKS then conducted capacity building sessions aimed at enhancing the banda's staff's skills in delivering standardised services and strengthening Nasuulu Community Conservancy's Board's understanding of governance and tourism business management.

In October 2024, after a series of Project Implementation Committee meetings, the Conservancy assumed the management of the new bandas, and operationalised them with MashinaniWORKS' support. Following this transition, a need arose to clarify roles, necessitating a meeting with the Conservancy's Board, at which members reviewed shared responsibilities outlined in an MoU between MashinaniWORKS, NRT, and the Conservancy. The MoU ensures the efficient operation of the bandas and establishes monitoring mechanisms to track progress and uphold accountability.

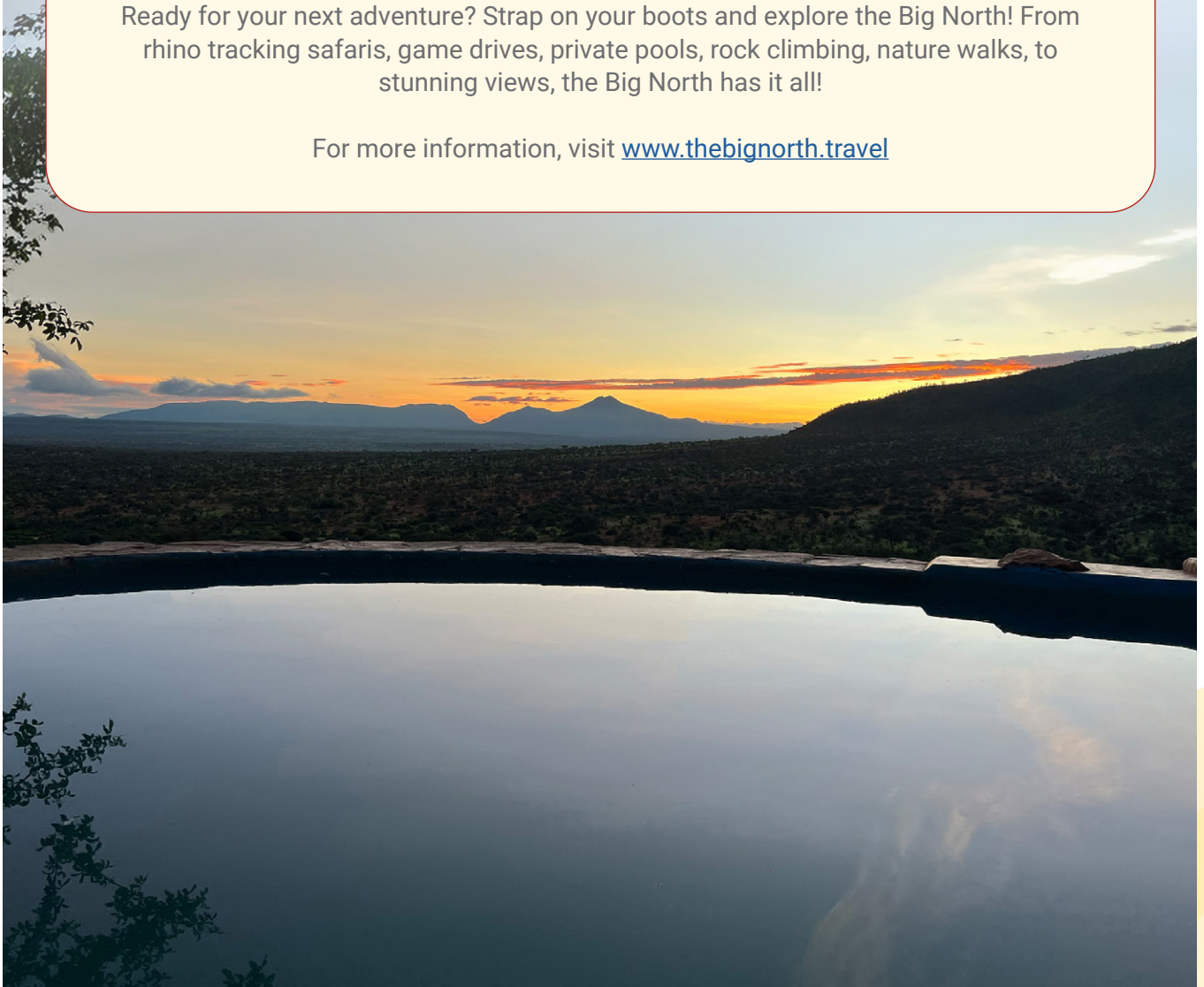
Nasuulu's Board was also briefed on the latest terms of reference for leasing, should the need to lease the bandas arise. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that all leasing processes are conducted transparently, fairly, and competitively, to protect community interests and promote sustainable management practices.



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BeadWORKS

Over the past 15 years, the BeadWORKS Programme has established an organised network of 1,200 women beaders from nine NRT member community conservancies in northern Kenya. These artisans produce high-quality, handcrafted products that are sold locally and internationally, across Africa, North America, Australia and Europe.

Women hold the keys to building a sustainable future for their communities. They are best positioned to make decisions that improve their families' health and welfare, and use cooperative structures to drive positive social change.

By providing access to domestic and global markets, BeadWORKS is fostering the social and economic empowerment of women in the remotest parts of northern Kenya's ASALs, who are confronted with profound difficulties, including gender-based violence, poverty, malnutrition, and insecurity.

A World Fair Trade Organisation-certified enterprise, BeadWORKS is more than a business. It supports conservation efforts and transforms entire communities by:



- ▶ **Generating reliable earned income**
For women in villages, BeadWORKS is a source of steady, consistent income, which they earn from the safety and comfort of their home.
- ▶ **Delivering training and financial services**
BeadWORKS provides women with life skills, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship training. The Programme also connects its beaders to mobile payment technology and Rangelands SACCO's financial services.
- ▶ **Leadership development**
BeadWORKS' Star Beaders hone their management skills by overseeing production groups, ultimately rising to positions of leadership within their local communities.



BeadWORKS Newsbytes

In 2024, BeadWORKS optimised its e-commerce platform, which opened up new markets and led to higher revenues. Further, the women beaders' earnings grew, as labor prices increased by 10%, ensuring fair compensation for the artisans. Outlined below are additional milestones BeadWORKS achieved in 2024:

- BeadWORKS generated **Ksh 36.2 million** (USD 280,620.15) in product sales, raising its total revenue since 2016 to Ksh 267.45 million (USD 2.07 million).
- Women beaders earned **Ksh 10.6 million** (USD 82,170.54) in income from the production of 75,626 items. Since 2016, the artisans have earned a total of Ksh 80 million (USD 620,155.03) from BeadWORKS.
- The business-to-consumer e-commerce website produced **Ksh 827,148** (USD 6,412) in sales.
- Eight NRT member community conservancies held quarterly review meetings to discuss challenges, exchange leadership insights, and explore alternative livelihood projects to supplement BeadWORKS' activities.
- BeadWORKS issued **Ksh 1.8 million** (USD 13,953.48) in conservation fees to community conservancies. BeadWORKS' women instrumentally contribute to the overall development of their community conservancies, by giving 5% of their total annual sales in conservation fees to their respective conservancies.



BeadWORKS Honored at the 2024 Kenya E-commerce Awards

BeadWORKS continued to make waves in e-commerce, solidifying its position as a trailblazer in the industry. At the prestigious Kenya E-Commerce Awards, held on the 20th of June, BeadWORKS achieved a remarkable feat—winning in all three categories the Programme was nominated for. This marks the third consecutive year that BeadWORKS has earned top honors at the event. BeadWORKS clinched the top position in three major categories:



- **Gold Award for Best Handcrafted Fashion E-commerce Website**, recognising BeadWORKS' excellence in presenting and selling handcrafted fashion items online.
- **Silver Award for Best Cross-Border E-commerce Website**, acknowledging BeadWORKS' effectiveness in reaching international markets.
- **Silver Award for Best Jewellery E-commerce Website**, celebrating the creativity and craftsmanship of the jewellery produced by the talented women artisans.

These Awards demonstrated BeadWORKS' commitment to empowering pastoralist women, promoting sustainable practices, and continuously improving its product offerings in the competitive e-commerce market.

BeadWORKS Expands Global Footprint

International collaborations with organisations such as San Diego Zoo and Mifuko introduce BeadWORKS' artisans' products to new markets, blending cultural artistry with conservation awareness.

In 2024, BeadWORKS partnered with Mifuko, a Finnish design company renowned for its eco-conscious approach to fashion and design. This collaboration resulted in an order for 80 beaded bags. The partnership also provided BeadWORKS with a valuable opportunity to present its products on a global stage, elevating brand awareness and showcasing the artisans' craftsmanship to an international audience.





Further, BeadWORKS expanded its brand reach by participating in the 2024 WAZA Annual Conference at Taronga Zoo in Sydney, Australia, where the team engaged with global conservation leaders, cultivated invaluable networks, strengthened existing partnerships and discussed potential future collaborations with Australian zoos. Early feedback from the event has been positive.

In October, three women artisans, Nabiki Lesuper, Josephine Nkasupat, and Benedetta Tingoi, travelled to San Diego Zoo in the United States of America, to attend the Wild Event, an exclusive celebration of their artistry and conservation efforts. During their visit, the team toured the Zoo's new Elephant Valley Wing, which is set to open soon and feature BeadWORKS' products.

The women's visit solidified BeadWORKS' partnership with San Diego Zoo's Elephant Valley Project, where BeadWORKS' artisans have designed a range of elephant-themed products, helping raise awareness for elephant conservation efforts. For the artisans, the visit was a phenomenal success, that also generated Ksh 418,368 (USD 3,243.16) in product sales.



Get Meaningful Gifts for Your Loved Ones

Take a moment to browse through BeadWORKS' website for the newest items, exquisitely made with love from northern Kenya. With every product purchase, you not only empower BeadWORKS' incredibly talented bead makers and their families, but also support wildlife protection efforts and community conservation. To shop, please [click here](#).

Empowering Women Beyond Beading

In line with its dedication to building the capacity of its artisans, BeadWORKS organised an entrepreneurship training for 541 women bead makers from Naibunga Central, Leparua, Kalama, Sera, Il Ngwesi, West Gate and Lekurruki Community Conservancies.

Supported by an Italian grant, the training covered various topics including goal setting, decision-making, business setup and financial management, financial literacy, and life skills. It empowered the women bead makers to diversify their income and become financially independent entrepreneurs, improving their overall wellbeing as well as that of their communities.



BeadWORKS: Transforming Lives, A Bead at a Time

Nalisan Lekoloi, a mother of three from Kalama Community Conservancy, is an artisan with exceptional beading skills. Her BeadWORKS journey began three years ago, and was a lifeline, providing her with much-needed income and a renewed sense of purpose.

Nalisan's life took a difficult turn when she lost her husband while expecting her youngest child. Soon after his burial, in an attempt to exert control over Nalisan's life, her brother-in-law made her stay at home to care for livestock and prevented her from attending any beading gatherings.

He went as far as sabotaging her work by spilling her beads, making it nearly impossible for her to continue. Despite this, Nalisan did not throw in the towel, and held on to her firm belief that beading would set her on the path to independence and stability.

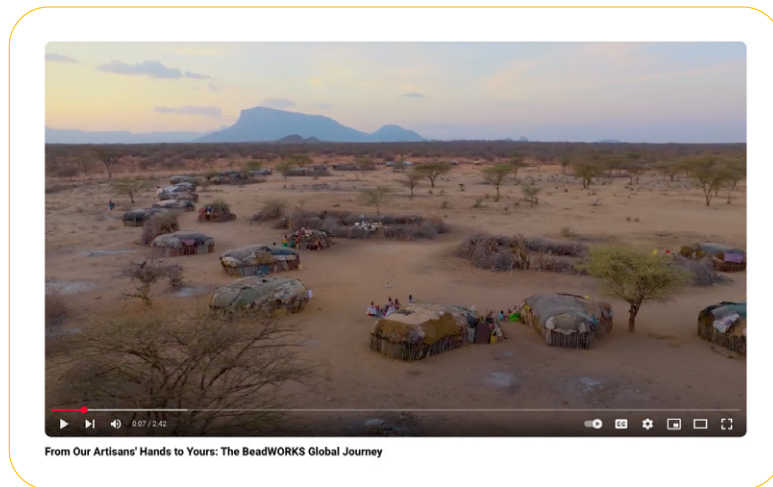
Nalisan's father stepped in to rescue her from the escalating situation and brought her back

to her family home, giving her the chance to start over. Despite the intervention of community elders, her brother-in-law refused to give her any share of the family's livestock, forcing her to build a new life from the ground up.

Through BeadWORKS, Nalisan gained not only a reliable source of income, but also entrepreneurship training that enabled her to make informed business decisions. Recently, a bulk order from a new customer yielded high returns, enabling Nalisan to invest in livestock, diversifying her sources of income.

Today, Nalisan has an optimistic outlook towards life, as BeadWORKS has enabled her to sustainably support her children. Each beaded piece she creates is a step toward a better life, and fills her with hope. Her resilience and growth despite all she has endured remains an inspiration to all.





BeadWORKS, a handicraft enterprise run by MashinaniWORKS harnesses northern Kenya's rich beading tradition to create opportunities for pastoralist women to translate their traditional skills into much-needed income.

Revenue from BeadWORKS not only enables the women to meet their families' basic needs, but also finances crucial conservation initiatives that preserve natural resources, benefitting entire communities.

Go behind the scenes with us as we show you what it takes to create each BeadWORKS product. [Watch the video here.](#)



Looking Ahead

MashinaniWORKS is set to expand its impact and deepen engagement, focussing on creating long-term value, by empowering communities to sustain their livelihoods, nurture their environments, and build a prosperous future.

The path ahead demands resilience, innovation, and collaboration. In 2025 and beyond, we aim to scale our programmes to equip more individuals with the skills needed to secure meaningful livelihoods and improve access to financial resources.

The achievement of our mission requires bold thinking and collaborative action. Therefore, we will continue to work hand in hand with local communities, government agencies, and international organisations, to design locally relevant solutions while addressing global challenges.

With your unwavering support, and that of our donors and partners, and the determination of the communities we serve, we are confident that we will build a better tomorrow and are ready to do the work.

MashinaniWORKS in the Media

The Star

[140 Isiolo youths benefit from Ujuzi Manyatani Programme](#)

The Eastleigh Voice

- [SACCO promotes financial inclusion of pastoral women](#)
- [300 herders graduate after training on modern livestock practices](#)
- [Laikipia woman beats the odds and ventures into animal feed production](#)

TV 47

- [200 youth equipped with vocational training](#)
- [Wanawake na vijana wajiendeleza kwa masomo Marsabit](#)

Inooro TV

[Ayuthi gũthomithio kothi cia moko, Laikipia](#)

NTV

[Zaidi ya vijana 200 kutoka jamii za wafugaji wanufaika kutokana mlengo wa njia mbadala wakimaisha](#)

KBC Channel 1

- [Financial literacy skills offered to youth and women in Isiolo](#)
- [200 youth have been trained in technical skills](#)
- [Ujasiriamali: Vijana wapata mafunzo ya kiufundi Isiolo](#)

KBC Digital

[300 herders from frontier counties have benefitted from a training in livestock production](#)

KNA

[Youth from pastoral areas benefit from technical courses](#)

Look Up TV

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

The Press Point

- [Ufugaji Bora Programme offers economic lifeline to pastoralists faced with climatic shocks](#)
- [Free training powers pastoralist youth to financial reliance as 100 graduate in Isiolo](#)

The Standard

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

KTN

- [300 herders graduate: course aimed at ending cattle rustling](#)
- [Zaidi ya vijana 200 wa jamii ya ufugaji wafuzu na taaluma tofauti huko Laikipia](#)
- [Ujuzi Manyatani Isiolo: Mamia ya vijana wafuzu kwa mafunzo ya ujuzi wa kiufundi](#)

Tukio News

- [Ufugaji Bora Mashinani to transform pastoralism](#)
- [Youth called to utilise vocational skills for better future](#)

Waso TV

- [Vijana wa Isiolo wafuzu na vyeti vya kiufundi](#)
- [Zaidi ya vijana 300 wafuzu kwenye mpango wa Ufugaji Bora Mashinani](#)

Culex Media

- [SACCO powering pastoralists to financial inclusion! How lives are being transformed in 9 counties](#)
- [Free vocational training powers pastoralist youth to financial liberty as 110 graduate in Isiolo](#)

Kamachu TV

[Wanachama wa SACCO ya NRT wapata zawadi nono katika maisha yao](#)

Nagaa Radio

[Northern Rangelands Annual Delegates Meeting](#)

AVDelta News

[Women, youths turn to vocational training to tackle unemployment in Marsabit](#)

Asanteni Sana

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