



MashinaniWORKS
Progress from the grassroots

ANNUAL
REPORT 

20
25





Cover Photo: Barti Leorto, a Star Bearer from Kalama Conservancy is among 1,200 BeadWORKS Kenya artisans translating their traditional beading skills into sustainable income.

(Photo by Adnan Yakub)

Abbreviations

ASALs: Arid and Semi-Arid Lands

EU: European Union

Ksh: Kenyan Shilling

LIF: Livelihood Impact Fund

MoU: Memorandum of Understanding

NRT: Northern Rangelands Trust

RPL: Recognition of Prior Learning

SACCO: Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization

TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UBM: Ufugaji Bora Mashinani

USD: United States Dollar

For this report, Ksh 129 = US\$ 1

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WHO WE ARE



MashinaniWORKS is a non-profit company limited by guarantee that strengthens community livelihoods across Kenya's ASALs by supporting the development of locally governed, market-facing enterprises. Our work is grounded in the understanding that meaningful economic participation is essential to the long term sustainability of both communities and the landscapes they steward. By enabling communities to earn, manage, and reinvest income locally, MashinaniWORKS helps build practical pathways toward resilient livelihoods.

At its core, MashinaniWORKS aims to make economic participation possible where it has historically been limited. MashinaniWORKS exists to address a persistent challenge seen across Kenya, much of Africa, and many rangeland regions globally: communities that maintain and protect valuable landscapes often remain excluded from formal economic systems, even when those landscapes generate significant conservation and

commercial value. Our work responds to this disconnect by building enterprises that allow communities to earn, govern, and reinvest income within their own systems, transitioning them from passive beneficiaries of external markets to active economic participants. By anchoring livelihoods in operational enterprises and accountable financial and governance systems, we support communities in generating income, managing resources responsibly, and remaining active custodians of the rangelands they depend on.

We work across community conservancies in Kenya and Uganda, covering vast communal lands that are often remote, underserved, and facing increasing pressure from climate stress, market isolation, and social marginalisation. By engaging directly with communities, especially women and youth, we co-design interventions that respect local culture while opening practical pathways to income generation, economic stability, and environmental stewardship.



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 Vision

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

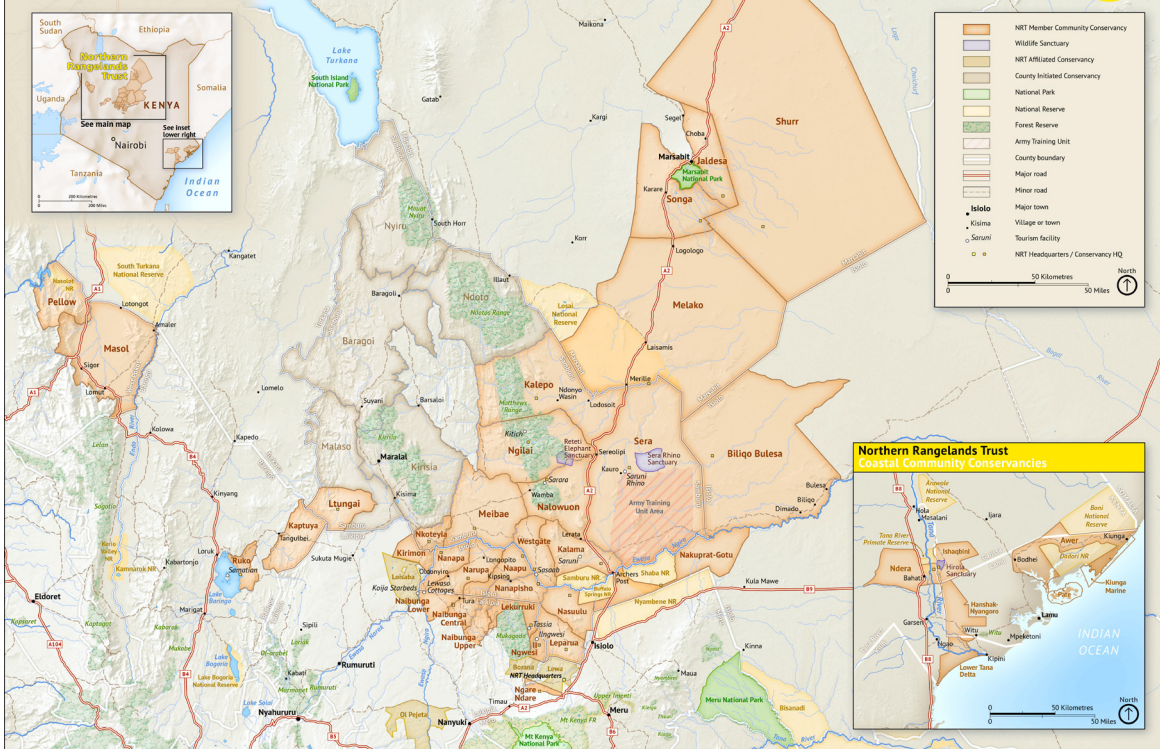


Our Core Values

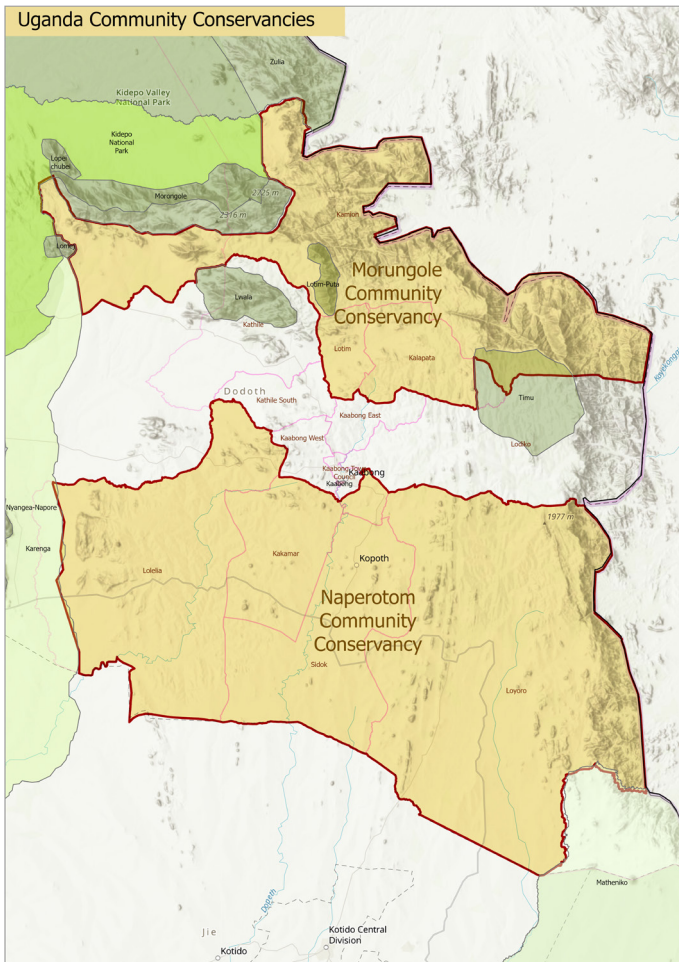
- » Integrity
- » Collaboration
- » Adaptability
- » Compassion
- » Dependability
- » Commitment to Conservation
- » Teamwork

WHERE WE WORK

Northern Rangelands Trust Member Community Conservancies



Uganda Community Conservancies



FOREWORD FROM THE **BOARD CHAIRPERSON**



Dear Partners and Stakeholders,


As we reflect on the journey of MashinaniWORKS over the past eleven years, it is remarkable to see how far we have come since our beginnings as Northern Rangelands Trust Trading (NRTT) in 2014. Those early years were shaped by fundamental questions about how enterprise-based livelihoods could complement conservation efforts, whether women's economic empowerment could strengthen local governance, and whether market structures could genuinely emerge from the grassroots. These questions continue to guide us today, though they have evolved in depth and complexity as both the organisation and the communities we serve have grown.

This year presented significant challenges, most notably the unexpected suspension of one of our largest funding sources. While this could have triggered hesitation, it instead became a moment that demanded resilience and firm commitment to our

mission. As a Board, we took deliberate steps to strengthen oversight mechanisms, reinforce risk management practices, and work closely with the executive team to preserve organisational stability. By ensuring that our governance standards, financial controls, and strategic priorities remained strong, we positioned the organisation to navigate this period responsibly.

Throughout the year, the Board engaged deeply with the MashinaniWORKS leadership team, reviewing scenarios, monitoring performance, and ensuring that each major decision aligned with our founding principles and the shifting funding landscape. This partnership reaffirmed our commitment to prudence, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

We remain encouraged by the support of existing and new partners, including the Livelihood Impact Fund, whose focus to boost people's ability to support themselves



and their families by providing skills, capital, and opportunities aligns well with our mission. These partnerships will be critical as we continue expanding rangelands-based economic opportunities with the aim of significantly increasing household income.

More than a decade of work in this landscape has demonstrated that MashinaniWORKS thrives when rooted in local priorities and guided by strong governance. This balance has enabled us to deliver practical, community-led interventions that respond to the needs and aspirations of those we serve. To date, we have directly supported over 10,000 men, women, and youth through livelihoods in craft, tourism, micro-enterprise, and vocational training, indirectly benefiting approximately 100,000 families across ASALs. These efforts continue to reduce poverty, enhance financial independence, and deepen community economic participation.

The road ahead will not be without challenges. Climate variability, economic pressures, and fluctuations in global funding will continue to shape our operating environment. However, we step into the next chapter with stronger institutional

foundations, a committed team, and an unwavering dedication to transparent, principled governance that aligns with the aspirations of the communities whose livelihoods we seek to strengthen.

I sincerely thank you for your continued trust and partnership. The story of MashinaniWORKS is inseparable from your belief in the transformative power of grassroots economic empowerment. We look forward to advancing this work together in the years ahead, and I am available to discuss this focus further.

Dr. Kevit Desai,

Board Chairperson
MashinaniWORKS



I completed Form Four in 2017, but after school, finding stable work was not easy. For a while, I worked as a bodaboda rider. Some days were good, but most days were uncertain. I never knew how much I would earn, and sometimes I went home with very little.

I first heard about Ujuzi Manyattani from our local chief and decided to enroll in the mobile phone repair course. After completing the training and graduating, I worked hard to start my own business. I used savings from my bodaboda work and sold some of my livestock to raise startup capital. I set up my workshop in a strategic spot along the highway, where people pass through every day. On average, I serve about 10 customers a day, mostly for screen repairs. I have also expanded my services to include TV repairs and sound systems, and I earn about Ksh 3,000 (1 USD = KES 129) per day on average. I am saving consistently and planning to open another branch. What I have now is a skill I can depend on.

Hussein Hassan

*Kinna Community Conservancy,
Isiolo County*



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Dear Friends, Partners, and Colleagues,

Working in the rangelands teaches you to pay attention to what endures, because progress here is rarely dramatic. It appears in small but meaningful ways, when a household has options during hard seasons, when young people remain engaged through a dry spell, or when groups continue organising even under pressure. This practical understanding shaped how we approached 2025.

Changes in the funding environment this year placed limits on how much MashinaniWORKS could reasonably take on. We responded early by narrowing our focus and limiting new commitments, a deliberate choice to safeguard ongoing work and avoid initiating activities that could not be sustained responsibly.

This meant the year unfolded differently from previous ones. Much of our effort centred on maintaining continuity where

systems were already strong. We prioritised women who were already earning through enterprise activities, supported the stability of community finance groups, and ensured that young people were able to complete the training programmes they had already begun. These were practical, community first decisions designed to preserve momentum where it mattered most.

At the same time, we continued laying foundations for the organisation's long term direction. We secured a partnership with the Livelihood Impact Fund on a project dubbed Tujipange Kiuchumi Mashinani, an initiative aimed at strengthening rangelands-based economic opportunities and increasing household income. Through the Northern Rangelands Trust, we also entered sub award partnerships supported by Danida, expanding clean energy access through the MotoSAFI Mashinani initiative, and advanced economic development efforts in Uganda under the EU NaturAfrica programme. These partnerships reflect a

careful alignment between our experience, our operational capacity, and the future we are working toward.

What stood out most this year was the perseverance of the people involved in this work. Our staff remained committed even during difficult periods, and community members continued to engage actively, allowing progress to build gradually. This resilience is what makes long term impact possible.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to supporting income-generation opportunities across arid and semi arid regions and strengthening the systems that help these opportunities endure.

Vishal Shah,
Chief Executive Officer
MashinaniWORKS



2025 Impact at a Glance

Biashara Mashinani

505

conservancy entrepreneurs trained in life skills, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy, enabling them to start and grow their businesses.



Ksh 1.8 billion

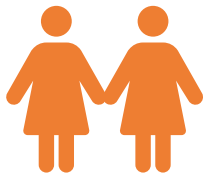
(USD 13.95 million) injected into the local economy annually by conservancy entrepreneurs



Ujuzi Manyattani

157

women and youth graduated, bringing the total number of graduates since inception to 1,713.



Ksh 1.3 million

(USD 10,077.5) accessed by 48 youth in microcredit loans for business start-up and expansion.



88%

of graduates have started businesses, while others have accessed meaningful employment.



Ksh 181 million

(USD 1.40 million) injected into the local economy by Ujuzi Manyattani graduates, income that did not exist prior to the programme's introduction.



Rangelands SACCO

518

new members, bringing total SACCO membership to 6,796.



Ksh 7.3 million

(USD 56,589.15) mobilised in savings and shares this year, bringing the total to Ksh 57.9 million (USD 448,837.21) since inception.



Ksh 23.1 million

(USD 179,069.78) disbursed in loans to 572 beneficiaries. Overall, Ksh 243 million (USD 1.89 m) has been disbursed to 6,245 members to finance business start-ups and expansion.



16.9 million

(USD 131,007.75) in loans repaid this year, contributing to a cumulative repayment total of Ksh 146.7 million (USD 1.14 m).



Ksh 6.8 million

(USD 52,713) earned in dividends by members (at a 15% rate) for 2024 performance; cumulatively, members have received Ksh 16.1 million (USD 124,806.20) in dividends since 2016.



BeadWORKS

Ksh 25 million

(USD 193,798.45) generated in product sales



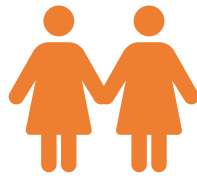
Ksh 782,775

(USD 6,068.02) generated through the BeadWORKS B2C e-commerce website



Ksh 4.8 million

(USD 37,209.30) earned by artisans from producing 47,167 items.



Ksh 1.3 million

(USD 10,077.52) contributed as conservation fees to the nine conservancies where BeadWORKS operates.



Ksh 237,329

(USD 1,839.76) issued as rewards to Star Beaders.



4

new products developed blending contemporary design with traditional beading, creating additional income opportunities and contributing to wider community economic growth.



Quarterly Review

meetings held in all nine conservancies to address challenges and share leadership experiences.



Tourism

Ksh 20.6 million

(USD 159,689.92) in cumulative revenue generated from five community-owned tourism facilities: Tassia, Olgaboli, Nkoteiya, Nasuulu, and Koija Star Beds.



Ksh 119 million

(USD 922,480.62) generated as tourism revenue across NRT conservancies.



Exhibitions

Participated in the Gateway Tourism Fair at Sarit Expo Centre, promoting sustainable tourism through exhibitions, networking, and workshops.



Big North

Developed a new version of The Big North website to improve digital visibility and streamline bookings across campsites and bandas.



Leasing

Successfully facilitated the leasing of Olgaboli, Nasuulu, and Nkoteiya Eco Lodge.





Unveiling MotoSAFI Mashinani: Clean Energy at the Grassroots



Challenge

According to data from the 2022 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey conducted by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), approximately 68.5% of Kenyan households rely on traditional cooking fuels, mainly firewood and charcoal, as their primary source of cooking energy. Evidence from national energy planning documents indicates that reliance on traditional fuels is significantly higher in rural and arid and semi-arid areas, where energy poverty remains more pronounced.

In Northern Kenya, especially, energy poverty persists as a significant barrier to health, education, and economic opportunities. A 2023 NRT assessment found that 76% of households use firewood and 48% rely on charcoal for daily cooking, often over traditional open fires that contribute to indoor air pollution and rangeland degradation.

Lighting access is similarly constrained. While 57% of households use mobile solar lamps, many still depend on kerosene or have no lighting at all, limiting productivity and learning after dark. These challenges intersect with broader issues such as poverty, gender inequality, and restricted access to opportunity, particularly in a region already marginalised by climate shocks, geographic isolation,

infrastructure gaps, and low household incomes.

Program Implementation

In response to these realities, MashinaniWORKS, in partnership with the Northern Rangelands Trust through its Water and Renewable Energy Project funded by Danida, conducted a clean energy sensitisation and pilot programme between May 26 and June 20, 2025.

The exercise reached 885 community members across 11 NRT member conservancies; Leparua, Sera, Kalama, Westgate, Ilingwesi, Lekurruki, Naibunga Lower, Naibunga Central, Melako, Jaldesa, and Shurr, in Marsabit, Samburu, Isiolo, and Laikipia counties. Women involved in beadwork and members of Rangelands SACCO were the primary participants, recognising their central role in household energy management. The objective was to understand current cooking and lighting practices and identify other suitable options that save time, reduce costs, improve health, and support environmental sustainability.

Key Findings

- » Firewood remains the primary cooking fuel across all conservancies, with 43% of households also using charcoal.
- » Only 3.2% of households use LPG, mostly for

preparing tea.

- » Existing biogas systems were largely non-functional due to water scarcity, maintenance challenges, and inadequate user training.
- » High costs and limited access remain significant barriers to adopting cleaner technologies.
- » Households spend an average of Ksh 1,270 (USD 9.84) per week (over Ksh 60,000 (USD 465.12) annually) on firewood and charcoal, an outsized burden relative to local incomes.
- » Women reported spending up to nine hours per week collecting firewood, often under unsafe conditions.
- » Health impacts are substantial, including smoke inhalation, respiratory issues, eye irritation, back pain, and burn injuries.
- » None of the surveyed households are connected to the national grid; 69% use portable solar lamps, while 31% rely on small solar systems requiring regular payments.

Community-Led Solutions

The participatory process revealed strong demand for improved cookstoves and solar solutions. Communities identified and nominated trusted local sales agents to support adoption, distribute the sustainable energy products, and provide user assistance. These agents received training on cookstove operation and maintenance to ensure long-term product effectiveness.

Launch of MotoSAFI Mashinani

With community agent training, MashinaniWORKS launched the MotoSAFI Mashinani initiative in Chumvi village, Ilingwesi Conservancy, a community that demonstrated strong interest in adopting the clean energy solutions.

By the end of the year, **506** clean cookstoves had been distributed across nine conservancies:

No.	Conservancy	Charcoal	Firewood	Total Issued
1	Naibunga Central	55	5	60
2	Ilingwesi	168	22	190
3	Sera	41	8	49
4	Kalama	13	2	15
5	Melako	83	1	84
6	Jaldesa	52	3	55
7	Ngilai	7	0	7
8	West Gate	18	2	20
9	Leparua	22	4	26
Total Distribution		459	47	506



Looking Ahead

The programme aims to reach **5,000** households by the end of 2026, offering a scalable model for integrated, community driven clean energy adoption in historically marginalised regions.

This work is guided by a broader theory of change: that when households and institutions gain access to clean energy and water solutions, alongside the skills to manage and maintain them, pressure on natural resources is reduced, health outcomes improve, and livelihoods become more secure. Over time, reduced spending on fuel, fewer health related costs, and time saved from firewood collection translate into improved household economic conditions and greater resilience to climate and environmental shocks.





11) MARKET RESEARCH TEMPLATE

PRODUCTS	CUSTOMERS	Needs and Preferences OF CUSTOMERS	Competitors	Gap (what competitors have for)

Sustainably Increased and Diversified Household Income



Biashara Mashinani



Biashara Mashinani is an entrepreneurial and skills-based development programme that builds the capacity of men, women, and business groups to start and manage enterprises, diversify household income, and strengthen economic resilience. The programme helps women and youth in northern Kenya participate more effectively in the economy by supporting diversified income sources beyond livestock and preparing communities to withstand shocks and adapt to climate impacts.

The programme uses a graduation-based approach that integrates training, enterprise development, business mentorship, and financial literacy. 505 conservancy entrepreneurs were trained in life skills, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy, strengthening their ability to start and expand small businesses. This model continues

to catalyse entrepreneurship, diversifying income generation streams for community members and increasing their self-reliance.

Biashara Mashinani is supported by two complementary components:

- » **Ujuzi Manyattani**, which offers mobile vocational training aligned to local opportunities, enabling women and youth to translate skills into sustainable livelihoods; and
- » **Rangelands SACCO**, which provides the financial services that enable enterprises to grow and reinvest.

Extending Enterprise Development to Ugandan Conservancies



Biashara Mashinani extended its enterprise development model into Karamoja, Uganda, with support from the EU NaturAfrica initiative. Engagements in Morungole and Naperetom Conservancies focused on business opportunity mapping, and business needs assessment—to identify locally viable businesses and skills opportunities, and fostering a coordinated approach to enterprise development. This process provided practical insights to guide targeted interventions, promote economic diversification, and build a foundation for long-term community-led enterprise development in both conservancies.

Across both conservancies, engagements showed strong community understanding of conservation, high exposure to livelihood shocks, and an increasing recognition that livestock alone cannot support households. Participants, comprising community leaders, women, and youth representatives, Community Development Officers, producers, and entrepreneurs, expressed a need for enterprise diversification based on local

markets. In Morungole, poultry production and honey were identified as key opportunities, while Naperetom highlighted poultry and vocational skills with quick income potential, such as motorcycle repair, catering, mobile phone repair, and crafts. These priorities were validated through detailed discussions with active producers, who mapped out production processes, challenges, and market demand, providing a solid evidence base to guide future investments and technical support under the programme.

Local institutions played a critical role in reinforcing the initiative. District and conservancy leaders endorsed the approach and committed to collaboration, positioning conservancies as effective entry points for local economic development. Over the course of the engagement, communities identified priority enterprises, recognised role-model entrepreneurs, and articulated principles for co-investment grounded in ownership, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

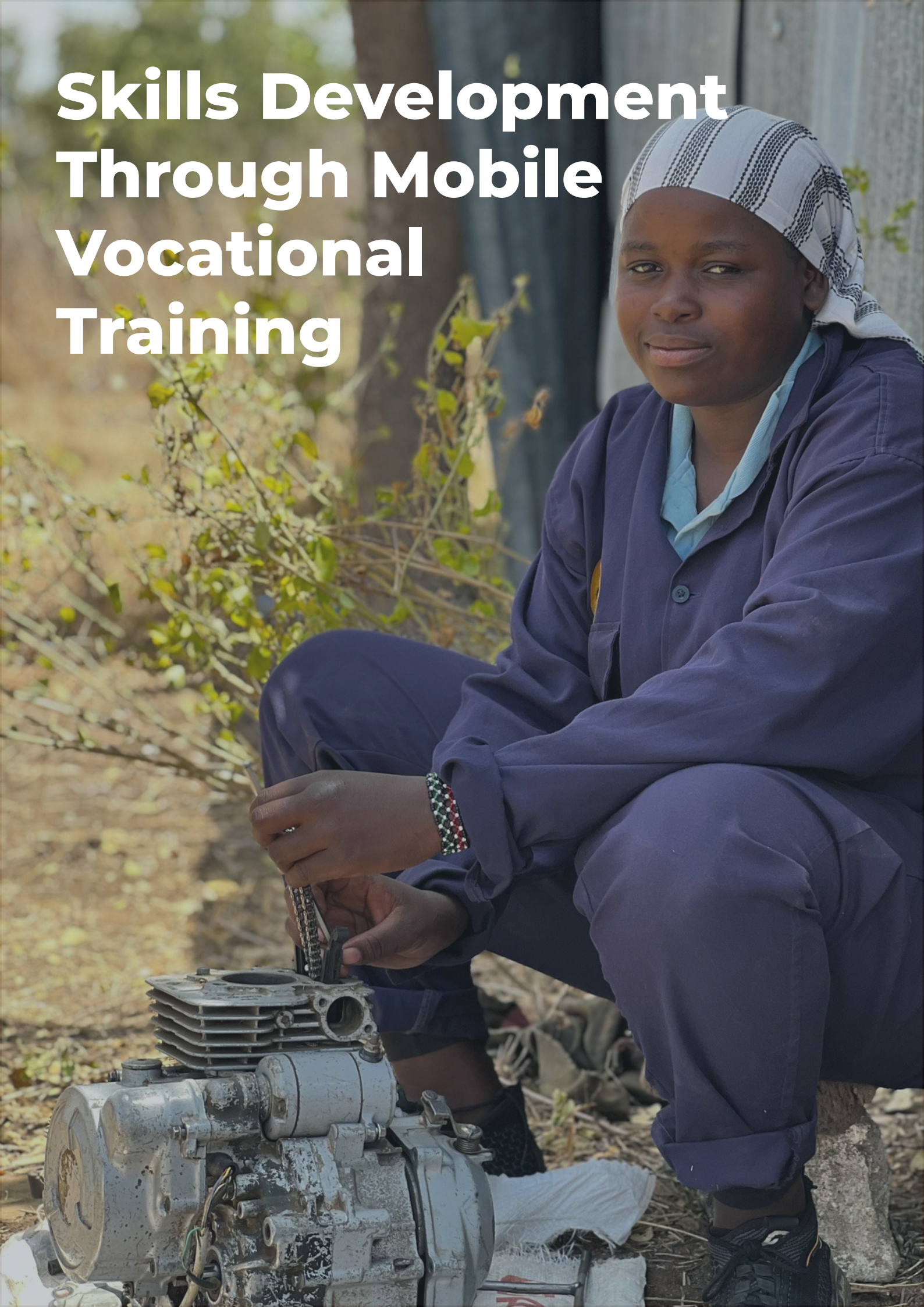


Further engagements continued in Masol and Pellow Conservancies in West Pokot. The discussions revealed a deeper programme exposure and uncovered more complex dynamics: strong interest in livelihood diversification alongside persistent weaknesses in financial discipline. Communities prioritised poultry, honey, beadwork, retail trade, and value addition, while vocational skills such as electrical and solar installation, catering, mobile phone repair, and masonry were consistently identified as critical gaps. Meanwhile, low micro-credit repayment rates emerged as a major obstacle to sustaining enterprise financing.

Biashara Mashinani framed financial accountability as a core development outcome. Conservancy boards acknowledged their role in loan recovery, communities revisited the principles of credit responsibility, and agreed on clear follow-up actions to restore confidence in collective financing mechanisms.

By grounding support in community-defined opportunities, reinforcing financial accountability, and addressing capability gaps, Biashara Mashinani continues to position grassroots enterprise as a durable pathway to economic resilience across arid and semi arid landscapes.

Skills Development Through Mobile Vocational Training





Ujuzi Manyattani

Vocational training is often imagined as something that happens in fixed institutions, confined to the four walls of a classroom. Ujuzi Manyattani redefines vocational training by taking skills development directly to villages, ensuring women and youth, often excluded from formal education due to geography, cost, or social barriers, can access practical, income-generating skills without leaving their communities or disrupting their way of life.

Operating across northern and coastal Kenya, the programme addresses long-standing gaps between formal education systems and the economic realities of pastoral and indigenous communities. In many of these areas, young people face limited schooling opportunities, high unemployment, and few viable economic into the local economy. Girls are particularly affected due to early marriage, pregnancy, and domestic responsibilities. For others, including young men and persons with disabilities, barriers to education have resulted in long-term economic exclusion.

Over time, Ujuzi Manyattani has reached individuals who would otherwise remain disconnected from training systems, including young men formerly engaged in high-risk activities and young women who left school early.

Training is delivered by qualified instructors from partner institutions, including Kiirua Technical Institute and Laikipia North Technical and Vocational College. These instructors travel between conservancies to deliver hands-on training aligned to local demand. Since its launch in 2019, Ujuzi Manyattani has trained more than 1,700 youth across nine counties: Isiolo, Laikipia, Samburu, Marsabit, Baringo, West Pokot, Garissa, Tana River, and Lamu.

While the first cohort consisted entirely of young men, sustained community sensitisation has steadily increased women's participation, with women now comprising 46% of all graduates. While locally delivered, Ujuzi Manyattani aligns with national development priorities, including Kenya Vision 2030, by expanding livelihood options, strengthening enterprise capacity, and improving access to skills training in remote areas.



157 Graduates Join the Skilled Workforce



Ujuzi Manyattani continued to scale its reach across the northern and coastal region conservancies, reaching 157 women and youth who graduated with practical, locally relevant vocational skills, designed to address livelihood gaps in their communities. Community engagement and awareness meetings conducted ahead of training highlighted an urgent need for vocational training, particularly in the context of rising youth unemployment, increasing drug abuse, and limited access to post-secondary education and training.

The year began in West Pokot County, where 35 youths from Pellow Conservancy completed a three-month training. The youth acquired skills in masonry, tailoring and dressmaking, hairdressing and beauty therapy, and motorcycle repair—skills aligned with local market demand and immediate income opportunities.

In April, along Kenya's coast, 92 trainees from Hanshak Nyongoro, Ndera, and Lower Tana Delta Conservancies in Lamu and Tana River counties completed training in tailoring and dressmaking, masonry, motorcycle repair and maintenance, hairdressing and beauty therapy, electrical and solar installation, and mobile phone repair.

In September, a further 30 trainees from Kiunga and Pate Conservancies in Lamu County completed training in electrical and solar installation, tailoring and dressmaking, and catering. In coastal communities where livelihoods largely depend on fishing, these skills offer opportunities for income diversification. Electrical and solar installation training was particularly timely, positioning graduates to benefit from infrastructure expansion under the Kenya Off-Grid Solar Access Project (KOSAP), which is extending solar services to villages such as Ndaui, Kiwayu,



and Mkokoni, where these graduates hail from.

In collaboration with Laikipia North Technical and Vocational College, all trainees underwent internal assessments to strengthen practical competencies, followed by external evaluations conducted by Nyeri National Polytechnic. This process ensures alignment with national Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) standards and prepares graduates for Recognition of Prior Learning certification. Since formalising the partnership with Nyeri National Polytechnic in March 2024, 581 trainees have been certified through RPL assessments, which validate their skills and prepare them for career progression.

Upon graduation, trainees received start-up toolkits to support immediate entry into self-employment and were formally linked to Rangelands SACCO, enabling access to tailored savings and credit products. These linkages are critical. Skills alone do not create livelihoods; the combination of certification, tools, and financial access enables graduates to translate skills into income. The result is a growing pool of skilled youth delivering essential services within their communities and creating new income streams that did not exist before Ujuzi Manyattani.

48 Graduates Access Microcredit to Start Their Businesses



For many young people, credit can often be associated with risk, repayment pressure, and the fear of falling into debt without a stable income. Through structured financial literacy training and continued mentorship, Ujuzi Manyattani has worked to reframe credit as a managed business tool.

This approach enabled 48 Ujuzi Manyattani graduates from the Sera, Naibunga Upper, Maiyanat, Shulmai, and Ilngwesi Conservancies to access Ksh 1.3 million (USD 10,077.52) in loans through Rangelands SACCO, with support from the Basecamp Explorer Foundation and Fauna & Flora International – Darwin. These loans, paired with business development and financial literacy training, provided timely start-up capital for these youth operating in tailoring, hairdressing, plumbing, electrical and solar installation, motorcycle repair, and catering.

Paul Kiperus, a graduate from Maiyanat Conservancy, represents this transition in practice. After completing his plumbing training,

he began with small assignments, such as installing tanks and repairing household leaks. Their Kiwanja area had long faced challenges with access to water, and when a communal storage tank was constructed, demand for household connections increased. He soon established a modest plumbing workshop, reducing the need for residents to travel to Nanyuki for essential plumbing tools.

Through consistent savings with Rangelands SACCO, Paul qualified for a Ksh 50,000 (USD 387.60) loan, which he used to expand his stock and diversify into additional hardware supplies. The loan strengthened his working capital, allowing him to meet rising demand while maintaining repayment discipline. His enterprise now delivers an essential local service and generates stable income.

Sustained growth is reinforced through ongoing coaching from the Biashara Mashinani team, which supports early enterprise growth and promotes sound financial management.

Preparing Skilled Professionals: Advanced Training Program Launched for 20 Ujuzi Manyattani Graduates



In June, Laikipia North Technical and Vocational College hosted the first cohort of 20 trainees (11 women and 9 men) for advanced training from NRT member conservancies, including Nakuprat Gotu, Leparua, Kalama, Sera, Mayianat, Naibunga Upper, Naibunga Central, Kaptuya, Ruko, Garbatulla, Cherab, Biliqo Bulesa, Shurr, Songa, Ishaqbini, and Ndera.

The three-month training aimed to improve trainees' existing skills while preparing them for career growth and better job performance in a fast-changing job market. The program used the TVET modularisation model, which breaks training into modules focused on core skills, offering flexibility and aligning with industry needs.

Advanced training included catering, cosmetology, motorcycle repair, and mobile phone repair, supported by foundational units on entrepreneurship, digital literacy, environmental studies, communication skills, and work ethics. Participants reported that digital skills were

especially transformative, significantly impacting their daily lives, particularly in becoming computer literate - a critical capability previously unavailable in their rural settings due to limited infrastructure. For mobile phone repair trainees, especially, acquiring digital skills proved essential, equipping them to effectively diagnose faults, unlock devices, and perform data recovery, which, in turn, is expected to enhance their business operations and customer retention.

These advanced training initiatives are designed not just to sharpen technical skills but to nurture well-rounded, confident professionals who can transition into mentorship roles as Trainers of Trainers (ToTs). This program empowers them to guide others and enhance localised technical expertise within their communities. We are excited to continue developing this component through an intensive, customised basic training curriculum planned for the near future.

Ujuzi Manyattani and the Making of a New Generation of Entrepreneurs



It is a Wednesday morning in Archers Post, and by nine o'clock the town is already alive with activity. Just off the highway, a freshly painted pink door stands out among a row of stalls. Through the string curtain at its entrance, black-and-pink salon chairs are visible beneath warm gypsum lights reflected in wide mirrors. A customer, freshly shaved, leans forward to inspect his reflection. At the counter, a woman jots in a notebook, shelves of neatly arranged beauty products framing the space.

That woman is Priscilla Nchichi Juma, a 36-year-old entrepreneur and the owner of Vinpelo Spa & Salon. When Priscilla first expressed interest in studying hairdressing and beauty therapy, reactions were mixed. Some encouraged her; others dismissed it as impractical, a pastime rather than a profession. Today, her confidence is unmistakable, rooted in the experience of building a business from the ground up.

Before all of this took shape, Priscilla's life was far from what it is today. The youngest of seven children, life changed drastically after losing both parents and the family's circumstances shifted

abruptly. Priscilla and her siblings were taken in by relatives, and her maternal aunt became her guardian, doing her best despite limited means. Although Priscilla completed primary school, financial constraints made secondary education unattainable.

In the years that followed, she relied on casual work to contribute to household needs. The income was modest and unpredictable, leaving little opportunity to save. At 22, she married and continued working to support her family. Together with her husband, they managed as best they could, but school fees, food, and daily expenses consumed most of their income, leaving little room to invest in a business of her own.

Her introduction to hairdressing came through informal work at local salons. She began with basic tasks like washing clients' hair, cleaning up, and handing over hairpieces to stylists in the middle of braiding. Before long, she was helping with cornrows, blow-dries, and styling. "Watching clients light up when they looked in the mirror made me fall in love with this work," she recalls.



Watching clients light up when they looked in the mirror made me fall in love with this work.

Priscilla Nchichi Juma.

Although she dreamed of owning a salon, Priscilla believed that proper training was essential – more than just skills learned by observation. She held onto her dream, considering it something for “one day.” That opportunity came in 2024, when she learned about Ujuzi Manyattani, a flagship mobile vocational training program under MashinaniWORKS that aimed to empower youth and women like her through practical skills training, without disrupting their way of life. The program, endorsed by the Sera Conservancy management, local leaders, and stakeholders, arrived at the right moment for her. Priscilla enrolled in a three-month course in hairdressing and beauty therapy and the program’s flexibility allowed her to attend classes while caring for her youngest child, making learning seamless for mothers like her.

Under the guidance of an instructor from Kiirua Technical Training Institute, Priscilla strengthened her technical skills, learning braiding, haircutting, skincare treatments, manicures, pedicures, and makeup application. Alongside vocational skills training, she and her classmates received business and financial literacy training which is a key component to developing the skills needed

to manage sustainable enterprises and generate profitable income. It has played an essential role in enhancing graduates’ business acumen, leading 88% of them to establish promising careers in related fields.

Priscilla completed the three-month training in June 2024, earning a Level 3 (Mastery) certificate in Hairdressing from Nyeri National Polytechnic, a nationally recognised qualification. She also re-ceived a startup toolkit to help her begin her journey in the beauty industry. Rather than opening a salon immediately, she took time to plan carefully. She began by working from home and offering mobile services within her neighbourhood, refining her skills while saving and learning about local demand.

As a member of a women’s table banking group, Priscilla had been saving and borrowing from their shared fund. When the time felt right, she combined her savings with a small loan. The funds allowed her to renovate a space, purchase salon furniture, and stock essential products. A few months later, her long-held dream became Vinpelo Spa & Salon.



The response from the community exceeded her expectations. Men came in for haircuts, while women booked appointments for styling and beauty services. Products that were previously difficult to find locally sold quickly. Saturdays, which coincide with market days in Archers Post, became especially busy, bustling from morning until afternoon. Today, the salon generates between Ksh 8,000 (USD 62.02) and Ksh 10,000 (USD 77.52) on a good day from services and product sales.

Competition in the beauty industry is unavoidable, especially in her industry, where loyalty runs deep. However, her clients keep returning. She attributes this to offering personalized attention, consistent follow-ups, and treating everyone as if they were the first of the day. This professionalism has earned her trust and word-of-mouth referrals which have slowly become her strongest marketing tools.

Her success now extends beyond her own household. The salon employs two young people, one as a barber and another assisting with hair and beauty services. The income she earns has also enabled her to support three teenagers in school, some of whom are orphans or come from financially vulnerable families.

Looking ahead, Priscilla plans to expand into wholesale beauty supplies and eventually become a Trainer of Trainers, which will offer a practical way to sharing skills to extend opportunity to other young people build livelihoods of their own, drawing directly on the pathway she accessed through Ujuzi Manyattani.

Financial Inclusion: Creating an Ecosystem for Individual and Group Enterprise





RANGELANDS SACCO

Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisations (SACCOs) play a critical role in Kenya's financial system, mobilising savings and extending financial services to households and small enterprises that remain underserved by formal banking networks. While the SACCO sector has grown nationally, access to cooperative finance remains uneven, especially across remote rangeland regions where formal financial infrastructure is limited.

Rangelands SACCO was established to close this gap in the landscapes of northern and coastal Kenya. Pastoral and agropastoral communities experience mobility, seasonal income, and frequent exposure to shocks making traditional financial products poorly suited to these realities. Rangelands SACCO is designed specifically for these contexts, offering a secure platform for members to save, access credit, and build financial discipline over time. It has also become a catalyst for grassroots economic activity in remote areas traditionally excluded from financial services.

Since its establishment in 2016, Rangelands SACCO has evolved into a community owned, community

driven financial institution serving over **6,700 members across 45 conservancies**. To date, it has mobilised **Ksh 57.9 million (USD 448,837.21)** in savings and shares and disbursed **Ksh 243 million (USD 1.89M)** in loans supporting **6,245 enterprises**.

MashinaniWORKS supports the Rangelands SACCO by strengthening its institutional and operational foundations. This includes governance support to ensure transparency and accountability, as well as systems development to manage savings, loans, and risk effectively. MashinaniWORKS' continued involvement focuses on ensuring that this institution remains sound, inclusive, and aligned with the needs of its members.

Through the SACCO, members are better able to smooth income variability, invest in businesses, meet emergency needs, and plan for expenses such as education and asset acquisition. By keeping financial resources circulating locally, the SACCO

reinforces economic resilience within community conservancies.

Ksh 243 million
disbursed in loans supporting 6,245 enterprises.

Rangelands SACCO Distributes Ksh 6.8 Million in Dividends at the 7th Annual Delegates Meeting



On 18 February, Rangelands SACCO held its 7th Annual Delegates Meeting (ADM) in Archers Post, Samburu County, bringing together conservancy managers, chairpersons, and delegates from 39 NRT member conservancies.

The ADM centered on reviewing the SACCO's financial statements and budgets and outlining progress against its strategic plan. The meeting created a structured forum through which members could interact directly with leadership, articulate their priorities, and better understand the financial approaches intended to enhance member value. Deliberations examined recent financial performance, governance practices, and the organization's projected direction in the year ahead.

The SACCO recorded strong financial performance during the year. Society assets increased from **Ksh 214 million (USD 1.66 million)** to **Ksh 238 million (USD 1.84 million)**, while member deposits rose from **Ksh 3 million (USD 23,255.81 million)** to **Ksh 7 million (USD 54,63.57 million)**. Dividend payouts increased significantly from **Ksh 2.6 million (USD 20,155.0)** at a 7% rate in the previous year to **Ksh 6.8 million (USD 52,713.18)** at a 15% rate in 2024.

As part of its member engagement and motivation approach, Rangelands SACCO celebrated outstanding contributions by recognizing and awarding the best-performing members and conservancies, including:



Paramase Lesanagi
Best Male Saver



Rukia Hadufo
Best Female Saver



Josephine Nater
Best Loan Borrower



Dade Roba
Most Supportive
Community Enterprise Agent



Westgate
Best
Overall Conservancy



Jaldesa
Most
Improved Conservancy



Kirimon
Most
Promising Conservancy

These awards aim to acknowledge and appreciate strong board and management leadership in the conservancies that drive sustainability and positive mindset change towards self-reliance. Strong leadership at the conservancy level has led to savings and membership mobilisation, ultimately strengthening financial inclusion and economic empowerment for communities in the conservancies.

Members also elected new board representatives, reinforcing the SACCO's governance and leadership framework. A two-day board training facilitated by Isiolo County Cooperative Auditor

and Cooperative Officer, Said Roba and Diramu Guyo, was conducted for the SACCO's board members. This training equipped them, especially those newly elected during the Annual Delegates Meeting, with the knowledge and skills for effective governance. Covering key areas such as leadership, risk management, legal and regulatory compliance, loan policy, taxation, and dispute resolution ensured that both new and continuing board members were well-versed in the critical aspects of SACCO management. A well-informed leadership ensures Rangelands SACCO remains compliant and responsive to the needs of its members.

Strengthening Governance Through the Village Enterprise Volunteers Model



Village Enterprise Volunteers have recently been at the front line of Rangelands SACCO's operations, linking members, enterprises, and the cooperative's governance structures at the community level.

During the year, Rangelands SACCO invested in targeted capacity strengthening for VEVs across several conservancies. In Nakuprat-Gotu, 31 VEVs participated in refresher training alongside Star Entrepreneurs and Conservancy board members. Similar training was undertaken in Nasulu and Naibunga Lower Conservancies, where 39 VEVs were equipped to apply updated lending policies, strengthen member engagement, and support savings mobilisation.

These efforts directly led to improved loan recovery and accountability. In Westgate Conservancy, VEVs led a community-driven recovery exercise that reached 95% of defaulters, recovering Ksh 140,053 (USD 1085.68) in a single mobilisation effort. Strengthened VEV engagement contributed to a total loan recovery of Ksh 16.9 million (USD 131,007.75), demonstrating the effectiveness of locally rooted, community-led credit management mechanisms.

VEVs remain instrumental in strengthening accountability and ensuring that lending, repayment, and savings are understood as collective responsibilities tied to the SACCO's long term sustainability.

Financial Inclusion and Community Wealth Creation



Rangelands SACCO expanded microcredit services to women led enterprises in Kinna and Garbatulla Conservancies in Isiolo County, disbursing over Ksh 7 million(USD 54,263.57) in loans to 252 beneficiaries. For many, this was their first experience accessing formal credit, given reliance on seasonal income from livestock and informal savings groups.

All beneficiaries completed a structured pre disbursement training on entrepreneurship and financial literacy, covering business idea development, business planning, record keeping, savings practices, and investment management. This requirement emerged from MashinaniWORKS' 2021 baseline survey findings on entrepreneurs in 25 community conservancies, which showed low levels of financial literacy. The training ensures responsible borrowing and supports timely loan repayment, enabling capital to revolve effectively within the system.

A similar approach underpinned a major conservation linked financing initiative. Through the Northern Kenya Rangelands Carbon Project (NKRCF), conservancies generate carbon credits, with a portion of the revenue channelled into the Carbon Community Fund (CCF). In 2025, Westgate

Conservancy allocated Ksh 3.4 million (USD 26,365.59) of its CCF proceeds to support women and youth enterprises.

These funds were disbursed through Rangelands SACCO as loans to 96 members, following the same financial training and pre disbursement procedures. The resulting Westgate Enterprise Fund operates as a revolving fund, allowing repaid loans to support additional members over time and enabling conservation revenues to generate sustained community economic benefits.

The long-term goal is to expand access to enterprise capital across all households in the conservancy, linking environmental stewardship directly with community wealth creation.



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How Rangelands SACCO Microcredit is Supporting Women Entrepreneurs in the Conservancies



When Jamarose Moru thinks about her childhood, she remembers her parents struggling to keep them in school. They had never received formal education themselves, especially given their pastoralist background, which has a record of some of the lowest school-completion rates in the country, largely due to poverty and a lack of financial support. Livestock was the family's only asset, and when schoolbooks or uniforms were needed, a goat or sheep would often be sold. Her eldest sister reached Class Eight before dropping out; the two subsequent siblings never enrolled. Jamarose managed to finish primary school, but the cost of secondary education was far beyond what her family could afford.

After leaving school, Jamarose found herself on a path that many young women in her situation often tread. She rose early to fetch water, sometimes firewood, helping her mother with chores, and tended to the family's herd until she got married by the time she was 18. Her husband's income as a casual security guard was irregular, and with children to care for, Jamarose turned to selling charcoal, a demanding, environmentally taxing trade, but the only option available at the time.

In the middle of her day-to-day activities, she would often pass a group of women who met regularly under a tree, with a locked metal box at the centre of their circle. In a place where little went unnoticed, everyone knew what the gatherings were about: the local Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA). Jamarose had always known of it but never thought it could apply to her; saving a few coins seemed pointless when every shilling already had a purpose. Yet she couldn't ignore how the group seemed to weather difficulties differently by finding help among themselves. That quiet sense of security and the way they supported one another began to shift her thinking. After a while, she joined them, considering it a small but hopeful beginning.

In January 2018, she was also introduced to Rangelands SACCO through its Community Enterprise Agent. As a member of a formal financial institution, she saw it as an opportunity to strengthen her growing financial discipline and began saving consistently. By 2023, her savings were enough to qualify her for a first loan of Ksh. 60,000. (USD 465.12) With that, she opened a small shop near their manyatta in Attan, just about a kilometre from Tractor, the nearby town centre

within the Nakuprat-Gotu Conservancy. Her shop became a direct response to the everyday challenges her community faced. Many residents had to travel long distances to Isiolo town to buy basic supplies, making the trip inconvenient and costly. By stocking essential goods such as sugar, cooking oil, rice, cereals, and even stationery, she addressed local demand and lightened the financial and physical burden of access.

That same year, a Biashara Mashinani endline survey found that 99.7% of businesses supported in NRT community conservancies had survived the 2022–2023 drought. Among them was Jamarose's, which, despite enduring significant losses, remained operational. Her customers, mostly livestock keepers, were struck, forcing them to migrate in search of pasture and water. Much of her income was also channelled towards ensuring the survival of their animals, including veterinary services, supplements, and water. In 2024, determined to recover and strengthen her business, she secured a second loan of Ksh. 70,000 (USD 542.64) from the Sacco, which she used to renovate and expand her shop, ensuring it could better serve her customers' needs.

On good days, she can serve up to 30 customers, bringing in around Ksh. 5,000. (USD 38.76) However, there are also slower days when her earnings might only reach Ksh. 1,000 (USD 7.75). When the business is less busy in the afternoon, she tends to their one-acre maize and bean farm and sells the surplus in her shop for extra income.

The mother of seven has long-term plans to take her business to the next level. One of her big goals is to enrol in a driving school so she can obtain her license and eventually secure another loan to buy a vehicle to help her deliver goods more efficiently. With reliable transportation, she hopes to reduce delivery costs and grow her business into a supply hub for other local shopkeepers.

Jamarose has become an advocate for sustainable, climate-conscious entrepreneurship, encouraging other women to explore alternatives to charcoal-burning and to join financial institutions such as Rangelands SACCO. She believes that access to tailored services, including savings, credit, investment opportunities, and valuable training in entrepreneurship and financial literacy, can transform lives, and she's determined to help others tap into that potential.



Beads That Change Lives





BeadWORKS is one of MashinaniWORKS' longest running and most recognisable social enterprises, grounded in a cultural practice that predates formal markets. Across northern Kenya, beadwork has long served as a language of identity, social status, and belonging, embedded in rites of passage, marriage, age set systems, and inter community exchange. Rather than reinventing this tradition, BeadWORKS reorganises it so it can function within contemporary value chains without losing its meaning.

The programme brings together more than 1,200 women artisans from nine conservancies across northern Kenya's counties of Isiolo, Samburu, Laikipia, and Marsabit, organised into producer groups that support aggregation, quality assurance, and fair income distribution. Participation is voluntary and rooted in community structures, with production taking place alongside other livelihood activities. For many women, beadwork does not replace pastoralism or household responsibilities; it stabilises them.

A single BeadWORKS product begins in a manyatta (homestead) and end up in a retail space thousands of kilometres away. Behind this journey lies a coordinated production chain that includes material sourcing, standardised production processes, inspection and finishing, packaging, logistics, and export compliance. Each

stage is designed to ensure that value is retained as close as possible to the artisan, while meeting the requirements of local and international markets.

Income generated through BeadWORKS has both direct and indirect impacts. At the household level, income is often used for food, school fees, and healthcare. At the community level, 5% of annual income is channelled into conservancy development projects, supporting investments in education bursaries, supporting conservancy rangers, wildlife protection, and other significant conservancy operations.

BeadWORKS also holds a distinctive position in the ethical trade space as a World Fair Trade Organisation-certified enterprise. Buyers are increasingly attentive to origin, transparency, and social impact, and the programme's ability to trace products to specific conservancies and artisan groups provides accountability that is both demanded by markets and valued by communities.

Over time, this network of women has grown into something unprecedented in northern Kenya, a women led enterprise that addresses deep social challenges, through economic empowerment.

Celebrating Women in Business and Conservation



On 22 July, BeadWORKS artisans gathered at Kalama Conservancy Headquarters to make their annual conservation contribution, presenting a total of Ksh 3.5 million (USD 27,131.78) in conservation fees. This amount represents 5% of their annual sales income, derived through beadwork sold in Africa, North America, Australia and Europe markets, dedicated to conservation efforts and community development projects.

Since the conservation fee model was introduced in 2016, artisans have contributed a total of Ksh 14.7 million (USD 113,953.49), directly benefiting their conservancies and strengthening the link between women's economic participation and landscape stewardship.

The funds were allocated as follows:

Conservancy	Conservation Fees (in Ksh)
Melako	897,212
Il Ngwesi	874,560
Sera	394,304
Westgate	370,204
Lekurruki	268,863
Leparua	242,948
Kalama	230,772
Naibunga Lower	136,270
Naibunga Central	132,208
	3,547,341



The event, officiated by Marsabit Deputy Governor Hon. Solomon Gubo alongside county officials and partners, also recognised excellence within the BeadWORKS network. A total of 103 Star Beaders received Ksh 1.17 million (USD 9,069.77) in recognition of their leadership and performance.

Star Beaders supervise groups of 10 to 15 women, coordinating, mentoring, conducting preliminary quality checks, and consolidating beadwork before submitting it to the BeadWORKS office for final verification, standardization, and processing in line with buyer specifications and market requirements.

Additionally, each conservancy recognised its top-performing Star Bearer, while three artisans were named overall best performers from a network

of more than 1,200 beaders: Nasaru Leariyaro (Melako Conservancy), Christine Shuel (Il Ngwesi Conservancy), and Nantiyon Letaapo (Sera Conservancy), who each received certificates and solar kits.

Melako and Il Ngwesi Conservancies were also recognised as the best-performing conservancies for the 2023–2024 period.

Beyond income generation, artisans continue to receive entrepreneurship training and business support from MashinaniWORKS, strengthening financial literacy, production planning, and market readiness. This integrated approach ensures that conservation contributions are sustained through viable and well-managed enterprises.



Strengthening Leadership and Management Capacity



BeadWORKS team delivered its annual leadership and management training to 305 women artisans across Leparua, Kalama, Sera, Westgate, Lekurruki, and Melako Conservancies over the course of the year.

This training is central to BeadWORKS' strategy for strengthening women-led enterprises, recognising that sustainable craft production requires more than technical skill; it depends on practical leadership and group management capabilities.

Training sessions focused on leadership, governance, quality control, financial literacy, and women's health awareness. Delivered through interactive discussions in local dialects, the sessions made it easier for participants to engage and apply the lessons directly in their daily lives.

A dedicated session on women's reproductive health addressed cancer awareness and general well-being, with sanitary pads distributed to participants, courtesy of Ibu Movement.

Review and Planning Meetings

BeadWORKS conducted review and planning meetings across all nine participating conservancies. These sessions brought artisans together in their respective locations, creating space for open reflection and interactive discussion on production performance, operational challenges, and the develop joint solutions.

Insights gathered during the meetings informed practical adjustments aimed at improving production consistency and strengthening alignment with market demand. Annual production targets were set within each conservancy to ensure alignment of output to match market demand.



Expanding Market Linkages for Sustainable Growth

As part of its broader effort to diversify markets and strengthen commercial sustainability, BeadWORKS continued to pursue partnerships that connect artisans to established fashion and design value chains. Notably, collaboration with Tujikuze Ethical Fashion Initiative, a Nairobi-based social impact enterprise specialising in bags and accessories, created new production opportunities for our artisans.

Through this engagement, artisans produced high-quality beaded pendants and decorative panels for international orders. Within a two-month period, the partnership generated over Ksh 2 million (USD 15,503.88) in sales, providing consistent work and income flow across the network.

Beyond revenue, this partnership opportunity contributed to skills development in precision beading, adherence to detailed design specifications, and timely order fulfilment. These competencies are critical in maintaining competitiveness within structured fashion supply chains.

This engagement represents one of several strategic partnerships through which BeadWORKS is expanding its commercial footprint. By aligning cultural craftsmanship with ethical sourcing standards and market demand, the programme continues to position women artisans within higher-value market segments while strengthening long-term market opportunities.

When Craft Becomes Capital: How BeadWORKS is Supporting Long-Term Artisans' Livelihoods



Pelina Kinyaga's journey with BeadWORKS Kenya begins at a moment when the program itself was still taking shape. When BeadWORKS was introduced in Lekiji Village within the Leparua Conservancy, she was among the first women artisans who chose to participate. Initially, her involvement was cautious: she watched and learned, curious whether this emerging enterprise could really challenge the rhythms of their community's economy, defined by livestock and seasonal uncertainty.

Beading, however, was already part of her life. As a Maasai woman, Pelina had acquired the skill informally, passed down from one generation of women to the next, and practised within the rhythms of community life. She produced necklaces, ceremonial headpieces, and bangles for morans (Maasai warriors), items valued for their cultural significance rather than their commercial potential. What BeadWORKS introduced was not the craft itself, but a reframing of it. Through clear systems of quality control, design guidance, and market access, the program demonstrated that beading could serve as a consistent source of income. For Pelina, the most compelling element was simple and persuasive: the opportunity to earn her own money and be paid fairly for her



work. The social enterprise, which now supports 1,200 pastoralist women across nine community conservancies, confirms that these traditional skills can be linked to consistent and meaningful income rather than episodic use or barter alone.

The income from beading introduced a new sense of predictability into her household. As a mother of six aged between early childhood and adolescence, Pelina carries responsibility for her family's daily needs and long-term well-being. What mattered most was stability. Unlike



narratives of survival built on borrowing as default, Pelina's life has seen that pattern decline. Earlier in her life, she might have borrowed money to meet day-to-day needs, but that was before she had reliable earnings. Her income from BeadWORKS now provides a dependable weekly cash flow: she receives regular payments for beaded products sold through local and international channels. In 2025 alone, the network of artisans collectively saw product sales exceed Ksh 25 million (USD 193,798.45), with artisans earning over Ksh 4 million (USD 31,007.75) from items they produced and contributing to both household and conservation needs without reverting to unsustainable coping strategies.

One moment that clarified this change for her occurred when her last daughter was sent home from school because she did not have a school uniform. The uniform cost Ksh 600 (USD 4.65), a modest sum in absolute terms but significant in context. Instead of scrambling for casual credit, Pelina approached a local tailor with confidence, grounded in her upcoming payment; they agreed to credit based on it, and the situation was resolved without stress. This instance signalled the prudence and emerging financial agency she now exercises.

Beyond income, BeadWORKS also exposed her to leadership support, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy trainings. These sessions offered concepts that Pelina applies directly in her daily life, particularly in managing household resources and making decisions for her family. BeadWORKS artisans participate in entrepreneurship support that extends to savings mobilisation and access to financial institutions such as the Rangelands

SACCO, where many now hold savings accounts and can access formal loans. This shift is reinforced by mutual support structures within the women's groups themselves, through which members save together and secure loans, fostering a social community grounded not only in craft but also in shared economic planning and mentorship.

Pelina's consistency over the years has made her a respected artisan and informal mentor. She continues to enjoy making belts and animal-inspired pieces, especially lion designs, that reflect her love for wildlife conservation, cultural heritage, and market appeal. Her contribution to the women's saving group — and the mentorship she both gives and receives — is part of a communal ecosystem in which financial habits, marketing skills, and collective ambition are reinforced.

Today, Pelina's life is marked by a practical stability that would have been hard to imagine before her association with BeadWORKS. She pays school fees, contributes to household nutrition and healthcare, and plans incremental improvements, such as building a permanent home to accommodate her family's needs. Her story, situated within a program that has generated hundreds of millions in sales and elevated women's participation in both local and global markets, illustrates how sustained, market-linked craft enterprises can reshape livelihoods through continuity, competence, and economic independence.



Choosing BeadWORKS means choosing quality, authenticity, and impact. Each product is handcrafted by experienced artisans working within a structured enterprise that values precision, consistency, and ethical production. Your purchase supports a growing women-led business network while bringing distinctive craftsmanship into global markets.

Visit www.beadworkskkenya.com to connect your style to the artisan's story.



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Increased Environmentally Friendly and Community-Owned Tourism Business





Tourism

Tourism remains one of Kenya's most important economic pillars. In 2024, the sector generated approximately Ksh 452.2 billion (USD 3.51 billion) in direct earnings and contributed to a wider travel and tourism economy valued at over 7% of national GDP when indirect and induced effects are included.

Within this national landscape, northern Kenya has emerged as an increasingly strategic tourism destination. Once viewed as peripheral to mainstream tourism, the region now accounts for a growing share of Kenya's nature-based and experiential tourism offerings. Community conservancies across Samburu, Laikipia, Marsabit, Isiolo, and neighbouring counties have expanded the country's tourism footprint beyond traditional parks and coastal destinations. Together, these conservancies form what is often referred to as The Big North—one of Kenya's largest immediate wildlife landscapes, home to iconic species and vibrant pastoralist cultures that enrich the visitor experience.

As a result, tourism in the north is no longer a secondary addition to Kenya's tourism sector; it has become a complementary engine that broadens the national product mix and deepens economic participation in historically marginalised areas. Lodges, camps, and unique landscape based experiences contribute meaningfully to local economies while reinforcing conservation outcomes.

MashinaniWORKS' engagement in tourism is focused on ensuring that community participation in this sector translates into real economic benefit. We work to strengthen local business structures, improve governance of tourism revenues, and support community owned or community linked enterprises across the tourism value chain.

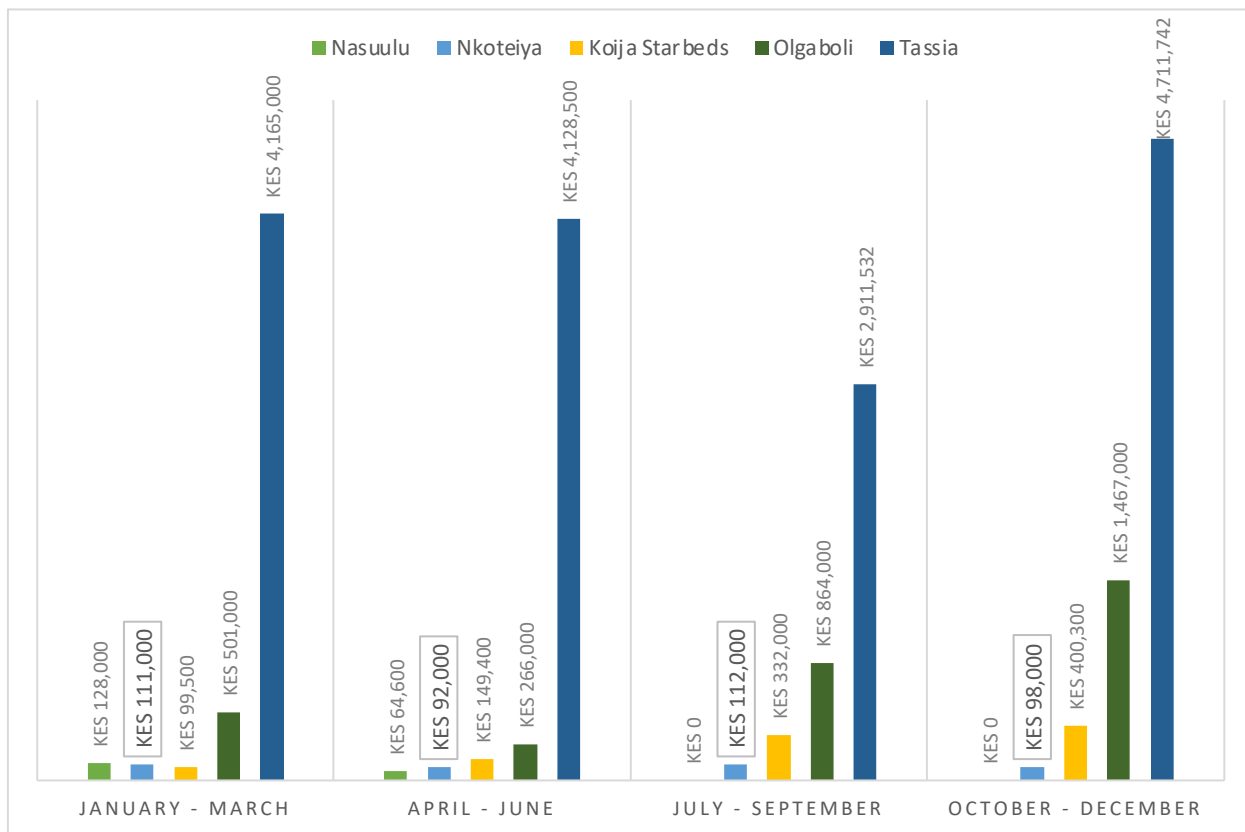
Our tourism program serves as an enterprise and market-access partner, working alongside conservancies and community actors to ensure tourism supports a viable local economy. This includes strengthening community-owned tourism enterprises, supporting conservancy tourism governance, and integrating local suppliers into lodge and camp value chains.

Tourism also plays a stabilising role in areas characterised by seasonal income fluctuations. During the year, MashinaniWORKS supported tourism linked enterprises and conservancies that collectively generated Ksh 119 million (USD 922,480.62) in local revenue.

Equally important is the institutional dimension of tourism. Conservancy tourism revenues are managed through community structures that allocate resources toward agreed priorities such as security, infrastructure, and social services. MashinaniWORKS works with these institutions to strengthen governance frameworks and financial accountability, recognising that the long-term legitimacy of conservancy tourism depends on clear, trusted benefit-sharing mechanisms.

At the national level, Kenya's ambition to expand tourism's contribution to GDP and employment increasingly depends on diversifying its destination portfolio and enhancing local participation in tourism value chains. Northern Kenya's conservancy landscapes respond directly to this vision by offering scale, authenticity, and ecological resilience that complement established tourism areas. MashinaniWORKS' tourism operations are designed to ensure that this national momentum translates into grounded, community level impact: locally owned enterprises that meet market expectations, communities that derive tangible returns from hosting visitors, and conservancies that are financially equipped to manage their landscapes and wildlife sustainably.

Community-owned Tourism Facilities Performance in 2025



Olgaboli Bandas recorded a strong improvement in performance from July to December 2025 compared to the same period in 2024.

This growth is largely attributed to the leasing of the facility, under which the private operator absorbs all operational costs. This model has enabled the conservancy to realise higher net returns and demonstrates the effectiveness of private sector management in improving the financial performance of community owned tourism facilities.

Tassia Lodge maintained the highest revenue levels among community-owned facilities, although total revenue declined from Ksh 17.7 million (USD 137,209.30) in 2024 to Ksh 15 million (USD 116,279.07) in 2025, a decrease of Ksh 2.7 million (USD 20,930.23) (-15.3%). The reduction is linked to the transition from self-catering to a higher-priced full-board model, peak-season promotional discounts, including a one month 50% rate reduction from July to September, and a month-long temporary closure for major repairs and construction of a new kitchen. These measures,

while they affected short-term revenues, remain essential investments to improve product quality and strengthen long-term market positioning.

Nasuulu Bandas and Nkoteiya Lodge were recently leased to private operators and are currently undergoing renovations. Both facilities are expected to be fully operational

by March 2026, positioning them for improved performance in the next financial cycle .

Koija Starbeds continues to perform below average; however, ongoing engagements with the conservancy and operator are focused on improving investment, operational efficiency, and overall financial sustainability.

Tourism Revenues across NRT Member Conservancies in 2025

Conservancy	Revenue (Ksh)
Namunyak-Ngilai	1,451,000
Namunyak – Kalepo	5,000,000
Kalama	34,912,861
Ngare Ndare	20,643,647
West Gate	29,253,119
Lekurruki	15,048,980
Nakuprat-Gotu	204,000
Sera	5,630,000
Nkoteiya	394,000
Naibunga Upper	180,000
Naibunga Lower	4,079,200
Nasuulu	2,500,000
	119,296,807

Leasing of Tourism Facilities for Increased Revenue Generation



Olgaboli Bandas Lease Agreement Signing and Handover

On February 1, the MashinaniWORKS Tourism team met with the Olgaboli Women's Group at Olgaboli Bandas to familiarise them with the lease policy framework that guides donor-funded tourism facilities. The aim was to ensure that the lease process was transparent and fair, and that community interests were safeguarded. Following the briefing, the women's group approved circulating an advertisement that ran for a month and attracted three investor bids.

Through a series of meetings led by Ilmotiok Group Ranch and the Olgaboli Women's Group, with technical support from the tourism department, the community awarded the lease to FigTree Capital Ltd. A negotiation process was followed, resulting in an agreed-upon bed-night fee with a guaranteed monthly minimum. The investor also committed to expanding the facility at their own cost, with planned additions including additional guest accommodation and amenities. An asset inventory was successfully carried out and signed by both parties, and the lease agreement became effective on 1st June. A follow-up visit was held with FigTree Capital Ltd to review operations since the handover. The investor has completed significant upgrades, including renovations and soft furnishings that have improved the facility's

standards.

"We're so grateful for the support that NRT, and in particular the MashinaniWORKS Tourism team, have provided in re-establishing Olgaboli. The Ilmotiok Community has worked incredibly hard to make this lodge deliver widespread local benefits whilst safeguarding the incredible biodiversity around it. We're looking forward to continued close collaboration," says Ludo Findlay from Fig Tree.

Despite some challenges, the community has earned meaningful revenue from the lodge. Additionally, several community members have been employed at the facility, creating direct livelihood opportunities. The lodge has also introduced new experiences, such as cultural home visits and school outreach programmes, designed to integrate tourism activities with community life and provide guests with a more authentic and meaningful experience.

Nkoteiya Eco Lodge Lease

On 25 February, our Tourism team met with Nkoteiya Conservancy board members to guide them through the lease policy principles that ensure a fair, transparent, and competitive lease process, securing the best outcomes for the community.



The conservancy leadership approved the lease advertisement, which was subsequently released to the public. The Tourism team facilitated negotiations between the Conservancy and the Sadron Family, who expressed interest in leasing the facility. A technical assessment of the airstrip was conducted to determine the requirements to extend it to 1,000 metres, enabling access for charter flights and future formal registration.

Negotiations concluded with the signing of a lease agreement on 26 November 2025, effective 1 December 2025, outlining a ten year term. The agreement includes a minimum guaranteed monthly rental fee, alongside bed night and conservation fees.

Nasuulu Conservancy Tourism Facilities Leasing Processes

Sarara Wilderness Camp

In Isiolo County, the Tourism team held consultations with the Nasuulu Conservancy Board and convened discussions with the Sarara Group to review the draft lease agreement for Sarara Wilderness Camp. The parties agreed on a revised non-resident bed night fee and a ten-year lease period.

In recognition of the current land tenure status, where the conservancy land remains under

the trust of the Isiolo County Government, it was agreed that the County Government will co-sign the agreement alongside the Nasuulu Conservancy. The Sarara Group also committed to supporting the process of securing a title deed to strengthen governance structures and long term investment security.

Lease of Nasuulu Eco Lodge

Ahead of leasing the Nasuulu Eco Lodge, the Conservancy Board held a series of zonal meetings to engage community members and secure their approval. After completing the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) process, our team convened a multi stakeholder meeting on 13 May involving representatives from Isiolo County Government, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), local chiefs, and Conservancy leadership.

A joint evaluation team from MashinaniWORKS, KWS, Isiolo County Government, and the Conservancy assessed the proposals and awarded the lease to Mr Alex Johnson.

The agreement includes a commitment by the investor to a minimum guaranteed annual payment plus a bednight conservation fee for over a 15-year term, with flexibility for future expansion to include tented camps.

Mapping of Potential Tourism Sites in 11 Conservancies

Tourism site mapping was conducted in the following conservancies: Naibung'a Lower, Naibung'a Upper, Nannapa, Narupa, Nasulu, Songa, Jaldesa, Nakuprat-Gotu, Westgate, Meibai, and Ngilai.

The objective of the mapping exercise was to identify, document, and package tourism assets for inclusion in an investment prospectus targeting both exhibition platforms. Identified sites considered scenery, availability of wildlife, accessibility, and remoteness. Sites mapped include Wakumbe Hills, Koija, Rumatu, Nalera, Lemartis, Tiamamut, Songa Tortillis, Boji Dera, Nkaika, Enkare Naibor, and Meibai.

The exercise culminated in professional photography and videography, producing a visual asset library to support investor engagement.

The Big North Showcases at the Gateway Tourism Fair

The Big North was showcased alongside BeadWORKS Kenya at the Gateway Tourism Fair held at the Sarit Expo Centre on 29 November. The three-day exhibition brought together tour operators, investors, development partners, and county representatives, providing a strong platform to highlight northern Kenya's tourism circuits, community conservancies, and value-chain enterprises. Through targeted engagements and product showcases, the stand presented investment-ready opportunities and facilitated meaningful discussions around market access, partnerships, investment, and responsible tourism development. The exhibition generated over 100 new contacts, reflecting strong interest in emerging destinations in the region. There are several promising leads, including discussions on innovative travel insurance and medical evacuation solutions to improve visitor safety, risk management, and access to essential services for both tourists and operators in northern Kenya.



2nd Conservancies Tourism Investment Forum

The Big North participated in the 2nd Kenya Conservancies Investment Forum, held at Emara Ole Sereni in Nairobi on 13 and 14 August, a national platform that profiles investment-ready opportunities across community conservancies and connects them with private-sector partners.

The Big North showcased Ruko, Meibai, Songa, Koija, and Lekurruki conservancies as investment-ready sites, inviting stakeholders to explore these opportunities. The event also facilitated valuable networking with key stakeholders, including Purple Elephant Ventures and its Safari Defenders initiative, which has since expressed interest in pursuing partnership opportunities. The Initiative is a coalition supporting the development of regenerative tourism across African conservation areas.



Highlighting Northern Kenya's Tourism Potential at the National Tourism Madaraka Week

During the National Tourism Madaraka Week, held alongside the Jamhuri celebrations, MashinaniWORKS participated in showcasing tourism opportunities from Northern Kenya. The event brought together national and county governments, private sector players, and tourism professionals.

MashinaniWORKS used the platform to present community-based tourism and conservancy projects ready for investment and to engage directly with county leaders and potential partners. The exhibition helped increase visibility of northern Kenya's tourism assets and sparked conversations about sustainable tourism development and future collaboration.

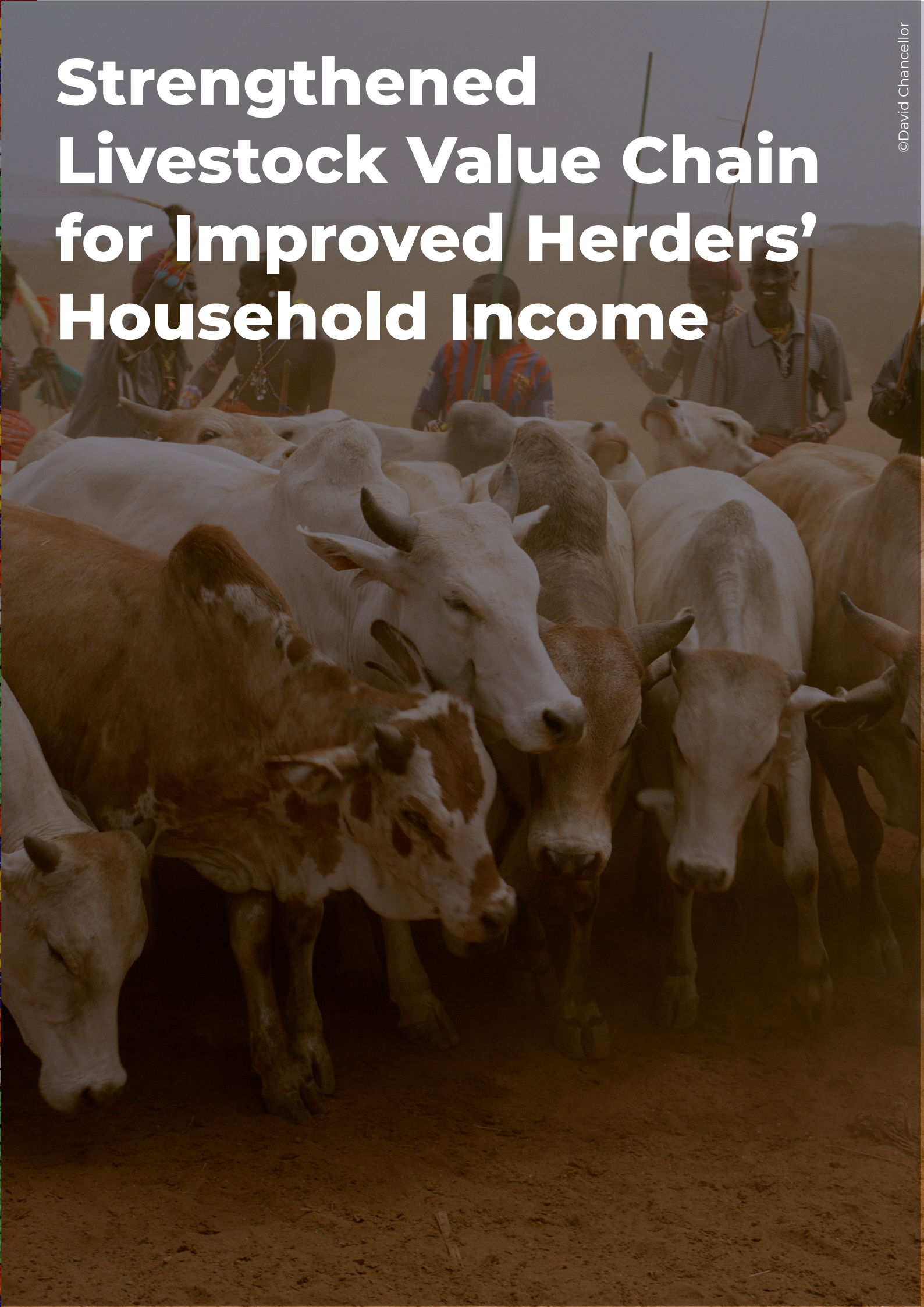
Marketing Enhancement and Expansion

Following participation in the B2C Holiday Exhibition at Sarit Centre in March 2024, Tassia Lodge secured a private wedding booking on 12th January 2025. The wedding involved accommodating 63 guests, which was well beyond the lodge's 18-bed capacity.

The event generated a direct revenue of Ksh 670,000 (USD 5,193.80) for the lodge, with additional indirect benefits of over Ksh 400,000 (USD 3,100.78) to the local community through casual labor, entertainers, and local purchases. The two-day event received overwhelmingly positive feedback from guests, many of whom have expressed interest in future bookings, positioning the lodge for continued growth.



Strengthened Livestock Value Chain for Improved Herders' Household Income





Ufugaji Bora Mashinani



In northern Kenya, livestock is more than just a source of income; it is a way of life for many pastoralist communities.

A 2021 baseline survey conducted by MashinaniWORKS, before the inception of the Ufugaji Bora Mashinani (UBM), found that more than 96% of herders had never received structured livestock management training. While many households owned herds averaging around 45 goats and sheep, productivity and profitability remained low. Limited access to quality veterinary services, repeated droughts, disease outbreaks, and poor breeding practices contributed to declining herd performance. Communities increasingly called for a more inclusive, practical approach to the livestock market system.

To address these gaps, MashinaniWORKS launched UBM, supported by USAID Local Works. The programme's aim was to provide practical skills training to herders, enhancing their livestock production capabilities and strengthening the livestock value chain, contributing to improved

household income.

A six module curriculum was developed covering breeding, feeding and nutrition, animal health, marketing, and climate smart rangeland management. 30 Livestock Marketing Agents were also identified, each receiving smartphones and solar charging kits to support continuous communication. This system now facilitates two way flow of market information, alerts on disease outbreaks, updates on rangeland conditions, and early warnings for drought management and disease surveillance. Furthermore, it has created a collaborative platform for County Governments and other stakeholders to improve on disease reporting and control, as well as intervention planning.

The farmer field school model has reached 300 herders across 10 NRT member community conservancies in Isiolo, Marsabit, Samburu, and Laikipia counties. The first cohort graduated on 20 March 2024, completing a three-year training.



UBM emphasises sustained engagement and practical learning, aligning delivery approaches with nomadic lifestyles. Training incorporates informal sessions and hands-on demonstrations to reinforce improved practices, including nutrition trials and deworming. These interventions have also created opportunities for mobile agro-veterinary service providers. In addition, trained herders conduct rangeland health assessments, monitoring grazing patterns and livestock performance to inform decision-making at conservancy and county levels.

The programme continues to implement its theory of change, which centres on improving pastoralists' access to information, strengthening livestock health and husbandry practices, enhancing productivity and competitiveness, and improving market linkages. Expanding the programme to additional conservancies, with a focus on youth and women, will further strengthen engagement in livestock value chain enterprises.





Independent Findings Reveal the Impact of MashinaniWORKS Farmers Field School

An external evaluation by BFA Global, supported by the Livelihood Impact Fund, assessed the programme's outcomes between 2021 and 2024. The survey focused on the adoption of practices, income dynamics, diffusion through peer learning, and resilience during climatic shocks.

Trained herders recorded an average monthly income increase of Ksh 15,519 (USD 120) due to improved husbandry and business practices. Knowledge sharing extended well beyond the initial cohort: each trained herder reached an average of 29 additional community members through informal teaching, demonstrations, discussions, and shared decision making. Of these, 82% adopted at least one UBM practice.

Adoption rates for technical interventions were especially encouraging. Nearly all direct beneficiaries adopted veterinary techniques, while more than 90% of indirect beneficiaries adopted practices such as community pasture management, fodder supplementation, and improved livestock marketing. Overall adoption across practices averaged approximately 80%.

Income findings reflect the realities of this period, which coincided with a severe drought. Only 29% of respondents reported overall income increases, but when income was analysed by specific practice, several techniques, fodder supplementation, market pricing strategies, antibiotic use, rotating studs, and improved breeding, were strongly associated with monthly income increases of Ksh 6,000 (USD 46.51)–20,000 (USD 155.04).

During the 2022 drought, households lost an estimated 50 animals each, with distress period sales occurring at prices up to 75% below market value and total losses averaging more than Ksh1.29 million (USD 10,000).

Beyond livestock production, two-thirds of respondents reported starting new businesses, with women recording even higher rates of enterprise formation. These ventures included livestock input supply, dairy-related activities, beadwork, and small retail enterprises. The data suggest that livestock training has functioned not only as a productivity intervention but also as a catalyst for broader economic engagement within pastoral communities.

New Program Developed to Unleash Economic Potential in Rangeland Communities

Following the success of UBM, a new program dubbed 'Tujipange Kiuchumi Mashinani' was designed and rolled out to unleash economic potential in rangeland communities. This new initiative, financed by the Livelihood Impact Fund, deploys a holistic, peer-driven learning approach that integrates best livestock practices, need-based financial and entrepreneurial education, and improved rangeland management knowledge to spur local economies and enhance livelihoods and sustainable income streams.

With role models identified through rigorous, consultative community engagement meetings, this program has been systematically rolled out, supported by a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track progress and inform implementation mechanisms for optimal community impact. The program has been rolled out in Jaldesa, Songa, Nasuulu, West Gate, Nkoteiya, and Naibunga Lower Conservancies.



Looking Ahead



2025 reaffirmed MashinaniWORKS' role as a systems-oriented organisation working at the intersection of skills, enterprise, finance and conservation. Operating across rangeland and coastal landscapes has consistently underscored the importance of locally grounded approaches that align economic opportunity with the realities of mobility, climate variability, and market access. These experiences have shaped not only programme design, but also the organisation's institutional priorities.

As MashinaniWORKS looks to 2026 and beyond, the emphasis will be on strengthening the quality and durability of existing pathways. The organisation's presence in these landscapes has demonstrated that impact is sustained when skills training translates into viable enterprises, when enterprises are supported by disciplined financial systems, and when governance is embedded at the community level. Maintaining this integration will remain central to future programming.

The year also highlighted the need for continued institutional resilience. Changing funding environments, rising demand for services, and persistent economic pressures at the household level require careful prioritisation, stronger internal systems, and ongoing investment in staff and data capacity. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensuring that growth in activity is matched by accountability, learning, and long-term sustainability.

Looking ahead, MashinaniWORKS remains committed to approaches that retain economic value within communities, strengthen local institutions, and enable individuals and households to plan beyond immediate survival.

MashinaniWORKS In the Media

Citizen TV

- » [Vijana na wanawake wafugaji wapata mafunzo Samburu](#)
- » [Wanawake wanaounda bidhaa za shanga watoa ksh. 4.6m \(1 USD = KES 129\) kusaidia juhudi za kuhifadhi mazingira](#)
- » [Wanaoishi kwenye hifadhi za wanyamapori huko Laikipia wapewa meko](#)
- » [Vijana zaidi ya 100 wapokea vifaa vya kiufundi wajiijiri kaunti ya Lamu na kaunti ya Tana River](#)

NTV

- » [Tija Ya Shanga Kwa Wafugaji: Zimekuwa kitega uchumi, kuhifadhi mazingira](#)
- » [Zaidi ya akina mama 500 wamenufaika na majiko ya kisasa](#)
- » [Wanawake Marsabit wamekuwa wakihatarisha afya yao wakikabiliana na moshi mwingi wa kupika](#)

KTN

- » [Zaidi ya wanawake 1,000 Laikipia wapata majiko safi kupunguza magonjwa ya kupumua](#)
- » ["Moto Safi Mashinani" Spurs Pastoralist Women in Northern Kenya to Adopt Energy-Saving Jikos](#)
- » [Vijana 92 Lamu na Tana River kwa wapokea vifaa vya uajiri baada ya kupata ujuzi wa kiufundi](#)

Inooro Tv

- » [Ariithia a gũthamathama kũheo mathomo ma ũigithia](#)

KBC

- » [Pastoralists in Isiolo educated on managing livestock during drought](#)
- » [Women in the beadwork sector donated over Ksh 4.6 million to support environmental conservation](#)
- » [Pastoral women to benefit from energy saving jikos](#)
- » [Pastoral women in Laikipia benefit with energy saving jikos to address health issues](#)
- » [Technical training offered to youths in Tana River and Lamu Counties](#)

TV 47

- » [Vijana 35 wafuzu baada ya kupokea mafunzo kutoka kwa Mashinani Works kaunti ya West Pokot](#)
- » [Mashinani Works yawezesha vijana 92 Tana River na Lamu kupunguza ukosefu wa ajira](#)

K24

- » [Pastoralist women in Northern Kenya turn to energy-saving jikos for health and environment](#)

The Standard

- » [Samburu pastoralists turn to cattle cake as drought bites](#)
- » [Isiolo women get Sh7m to boost small businesses](#)
- » [How 1200 pastoralist women are making millions through beads](#)

Daily Nation

- » [From culture to cash: How beadwork is empowering pastoralist women](#)

KNA

- » [35 Pellow Community Conservancy affiliates gain vocational skills](#)
- » [92 youths graduate with market-ready skills](#)

People Daily

- » [Northern Kenya women earning and conserving through beading](#)

The Star

- » [Marsabit women get relief through eco-friendly stoves](#)

Kenya Digital News

- » [Pastoralist Women in Northern Kenya Embrace Energy-Saving Jikos to Protect Health and Environment!!](#)

The Press Point

- » [From Guns to Growth! How Morans are rebuilding lives through business](#)



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