



**Stronger
Organizations:**



Greater Impact

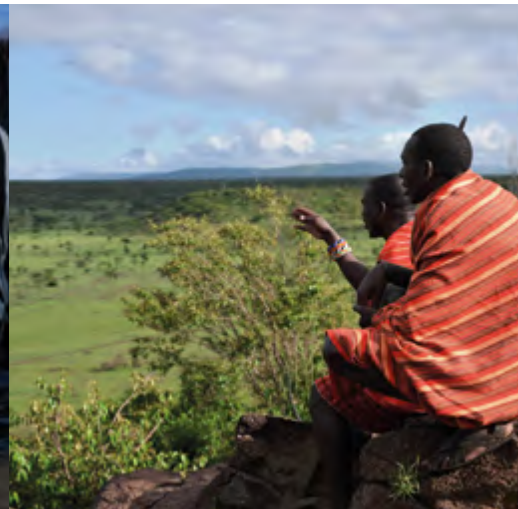
**CASE STUDY: THE KENYA
CONSERVANCY MOVEMENT**



This case study describes the organizational growth and impact of some of Kenya's most critical actors in its conservancy movement. Maliasili has worked with each organization differently, meeting them where they're at and providing the support they need in order to achieve maximum impact. Here we share those individual stories, which, when told together, illustrate how the growth of outstanding local organizations are leading to pioneering new conservation approaches and impacts on the ground.

“Conservancies are fast emerging as the centerpiece of natural resource conservation on the rangelands.”

Source: Ogutu JO, Piepho H-P, Said MY, Ojwang GO, Njino LW, Kifugo SC, et al. (2016) Extreme Wildlife Declines and Concurrent Increase in Livestock Numbers in Kenya: What Are the Causes? PLoS ONE 11(9): e0163249.



ABOUT MALIASILI

Maliasili helps make outstanding African conservation organizations even better. We do that by working with a select portfolio of talented local organizations and providing them with customized, multi-year organizational support. Our goal is to help our partners become stronger and more effective organizations so that they can grow their impact and deliver on their missions.

HOW WE WORK



Strategy + People + Action = Impact

STRATEGY is about understanding what needs to get done and designing the right path to do it. It involves big thinking yet practical solutions.

- **Strategic Planning**
- **Impact Models**

PEOPLE in an organisation bring the ideas, skills, and energy to drive change. Whether visionaries, technicians, or work-horses, we help organizations get the most out of their teams.

- **Human Resources**
- **Leadership**
- **Board Governance**
- **Relationships**

ACTION is how a team brings a strategy to life. It's how it raises money to make things happen, plans its activities to stay focused, measures its progress, or lets others know what it is doing and why it matters.

- **Work Planning**
- **Budgeting**
- **Financial Management**
- **Monitoring & Evaluation**
- **Communications**
- **Fundraising**

STRENGTHENING A NEW GENERATION OF KENYAN CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP

Kenya is home to some of Africa's most important wildlife areas and iconic landscapes, from the rolling savannah of the Maasai Mara, to the elephant-filled swamps of Amboseli, to the foothills of Mount Kenya. The past decade has seen the emergence and growth of locally formed 'conservancies' on community and private lands. Conservancies now cover over six million hectares, or about 11% of Kenya's total land area, and are enshrined as a key part of the country's conservation approaches through the 2013 Wildlife Conservation Act and subsequent National Wildlife Strategy.

At the center of this community-based conservation movement are a range of Kenyan conservation organizations that are strengthening conservancies locally and championing them nationally and even globally. Since 2015, Maliasili has been working to support a growing set of these rising Kenyan conservation leaders, so that they can drive change in their communities and their country, through expanding and strengthening conservancies and related community-based models. This work illustrates how Maliasili's portfolio-based approach focused on supporting key local partner organizations can contribute to conservation impact on a national scale, by building up a network of strong local organizations working to advance locally-grounded conservation approaches across an entire country.

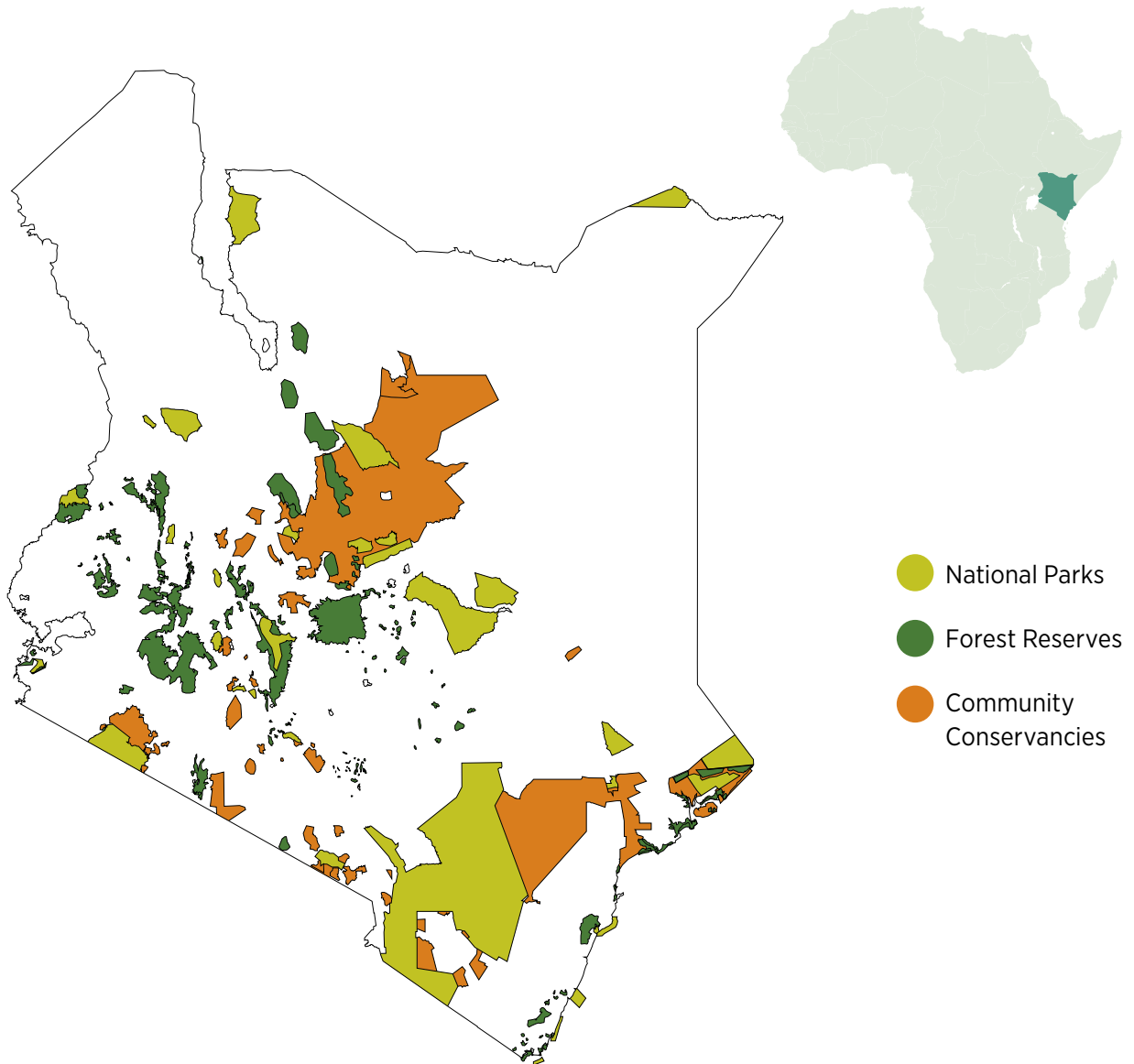
“Conservancies could play a crucial role in halting the collapse of wildlife in Kenya by extending the areas under protection around parks, reconnecting habitats, and limiting overcrowding in parks. And more than that, conservancies offer levers to boost and diversify economic activities in some of the most remote parts of the country.”

—When Good Conservation Becomes Good Economics, World Bank report, 2019

Conservancies play a key role in the conservation of some of Kenya's most endangered wildlife. 90% of total populations of Grevy's zebra and hirola antelope—both highly endangered species almost entirely restricted to Kenya—are found on private and community conservancies.



CONSERVANCIES IN KENYA





KWCA: THE NATIONAL VOICE FOR CONSERVANCIES

At the heart of Kenya's conservancies movement is the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA), which was formed in 2013 to serve as the national umbrella organization representing the country's growing number of conservancies. KWCA serves as a national voice and advocate for conservancies, which comprise its membership, and focuses its efforts on influencing key policy decisions, creating networking and learning opportunities across different conservancies and regions, and promoting conservancies nationally and internationally.

ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

Since 2015, Maliasili and KWCA have systematically worked to strengthen KWCA's organizational capacity and performance, helping the organization mature into a national leader in Kenyan conservation and move from a relatively nascent start-up with only two founding staff members, to a more effective and established organization that now plays a critical national leadership role in the country's conservation and natural resources sector.

STRATEGY

KWCA set out to develop a new five-year strategic plan with Maliasili's support in 2019 that will chart the path for their next phase of organizational development. A key breakthrough for KWCA during the strategic planning process was their recognition that as a national umbrella body representing all of Kenya's conservancies, they need to be an 'enabler' rather than an 'implementer,' which was a role they often played as a young organization trying to get off the ground. For the next five years KWCA will focus on



building the capacity of the Regional Associations that represent conservancies; serving as an information hub for the conservancy movement; and ensuring national policies and practices are supportive and favorable to communities and conservation.



PEOPLE

A key early step for Maliasili's work with KWCA was identifying critical human resource gaps for the growing organization. In 2016, Maliasili helped KWCA define and recruit a new position of Communications Manager. This role has been key to building KWCA's ability to provide a national voice for conservancies in Kenya through a range of communications and membership support activities.

Another important area of work was restructuring KWCA's Board. Maliasili worked with KWCA to establish a new two-tiered governance system, turning what had been one large initial board into two more manageable and strategic bodies: an executive committee that provides more over-arching and technical support; and a National Council serving as a broader representative body for conservancy members. This allows KWCA to obtain strategic support in decision-making, while still maintaining accountability to its grassroots membership.

KWCA's Chief Executive Officer and Policy Coordinator participated in the African Conservation Leadership Network (ACLN), a leadership development program delivered by Maliasili in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy. This helped KWCA's founding leadership develop new collaborations, gain access to a peer support group, and strengthened their individual leadership approaches.



“ *The African Conservation Leadership Network allowed me to access like-minded professional colleagues, and it is so empowering to know that you are not alone and have support from other skilled people outside one's work realm.*”

—Dickson Kaelo, CEO, KWCA

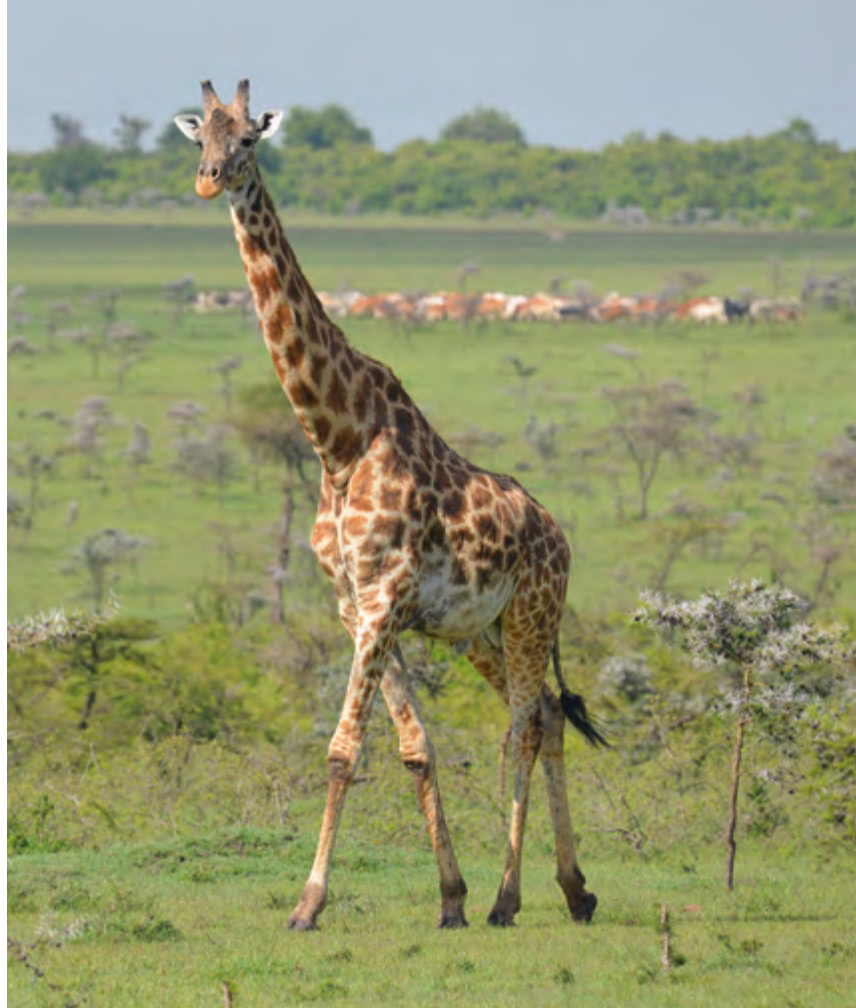




ACTION

Maliasili has worked with KWCA to develop the systems and structures to improve organization-wide planning. This includes utilizing annual work plans with specific targets based on their organizational strategy, which helps maintain strategic focus and prioritize the KWCA team's investment of time and resources.

With Maliasili's support, KWCA has developed a communications strategy and a more refined, recognizable, and consistent brand. This has been extended to developing new tools that help with KWCA's ability to engage in policy advocacy and facilitate information sharing.

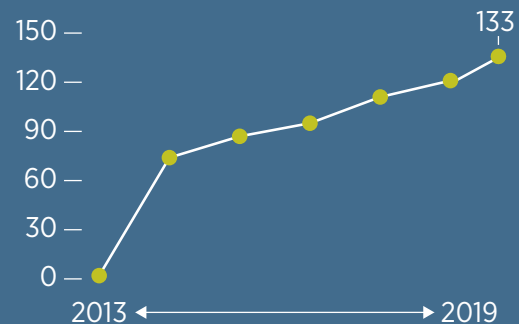


“

KWCA's engagement with Maliasili has seen us become a recognized brand.”

—Dickson Ole Kaelo, CEO, KWCA

Fig 1 | Growth in the number of KWCA Member conservancies





Over the past several years, KWCA has played a growing leadership role in Kenyan conservation policy and practice. A key focus has been helping Kenya's Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013 become effective, including through developing subsequent regulations and other related legal instruments.

KWCA has also helped bring community voices to major national decision-making platforms such as Kenya Wildlife Service's Board of Trustees; Kenya's National Utilization Taskforce; and the development of Kenya's National Wildlife Strategy 2030.

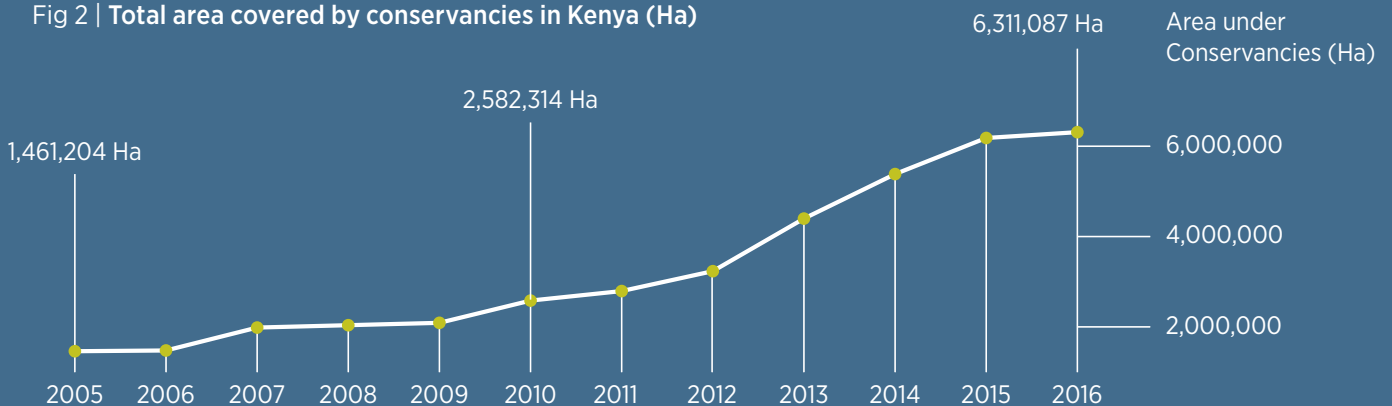
KWCA has become the lead source of information on conservancies in Kenya, including through the publication of the first-ever State of Wildlife Conservancies in Kenya (2016) national report.

Today, conservancies in Kenya:

- Directly impact the lives of more than 700,000 households
- Are home to roughly 25% of the country's wildlife.



Fig 2 | Total area covered by conservancies in Kenya (Ha)





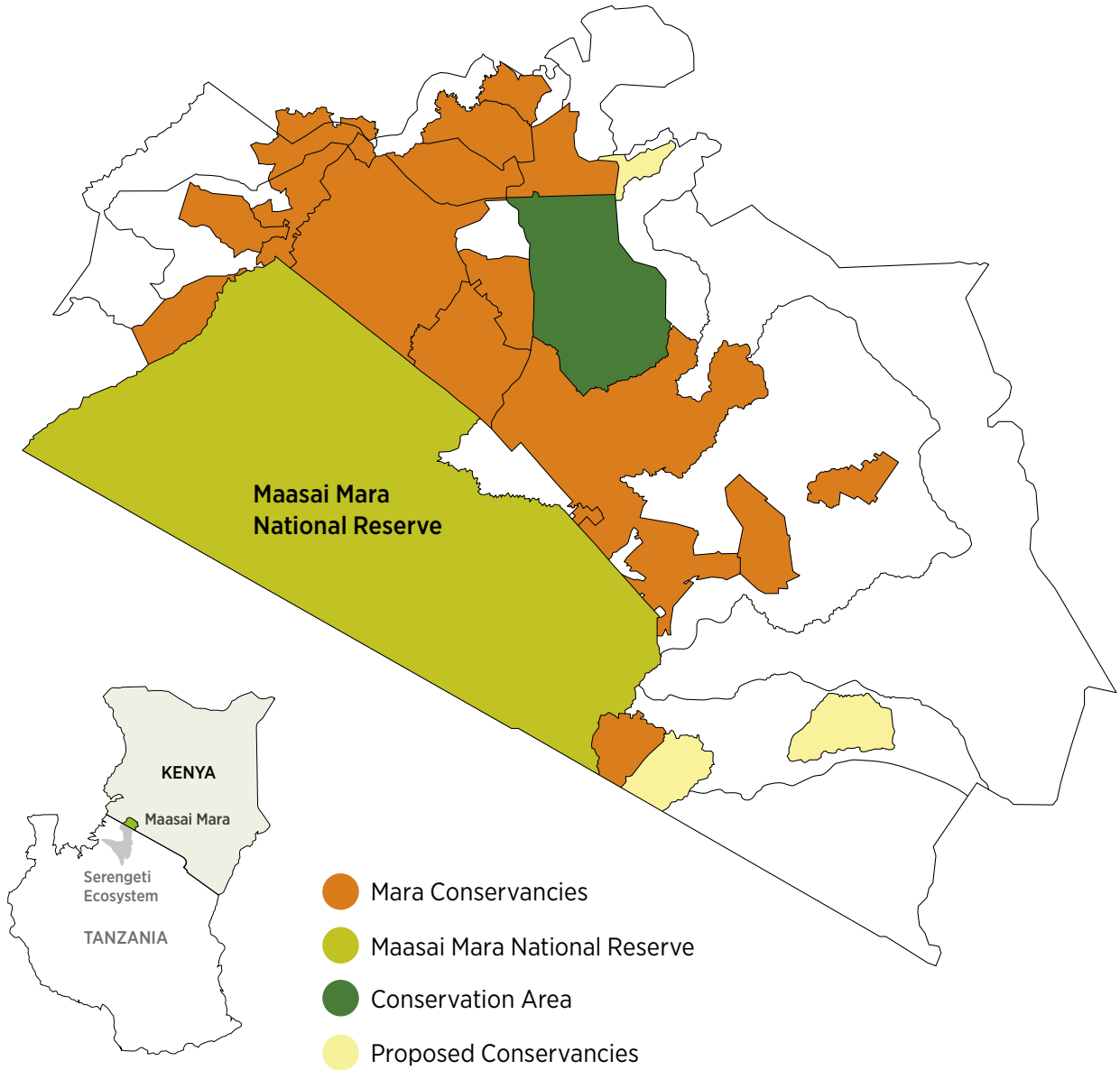
MMWCA | STRENGTHENING CONSERVANCIES IN THE MAASAI MARA

KWCA leads the country's conservancies movement at the national policy level, while a range of more grassroots associations provide coordinated support to conservancies on the ground. One of the most prominent of these is the Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association (MMWCA), established in 2013 to represent and support a growing group of conservancies surrounding the Maasai Mara National Reserve, Kenya's most important wildlife area and a key part of the Greater Serengeti-Mara ecosystem. Since late 2015, Maliasili has worked with MMWCA to strengthen the organization's development as a key emerging grassroots conservation leader.

STRATEGY

Maliasili facilitated MMWCA's first overarching strategic plan in 2016, as a key foundation for the organization's growth and development. This strategic plan helped MMWCA focus on key priorities like securing land under conservation, conservancy management, landscape connectivity through expanded conservancies, and strengthened governance structures, and also provided a focus for fundraising and resource mobilization.







PEOPLE

As a young organization, leadership and staffing has been a critical priority for MMWCA during this formative period. Maliasili assisted the MMWCA board manage a series of leadership transitions during 2016-2017, which led to Daniel Sopia assuming leadership as MMWCA CEO. At the same time, Sopia participated in the African Conservation Leadership Network program, which helped equip him with the skills and peer network to successfully lead MMWCA. Maliasili has also supported in the definition of other key positions, including MMWCA's first Chief Operating Officer in 2018, and periodically working with the team to review organizational roles, structure, and staffing gaps as the organization has grown.

Maliasili has also worked directly with the MMWCA board to strengthen their capacity, through a series of trainings and workshops. Most recently, in 2019, this led to development of a 'board charter' that helps better define board member roles and expectations in support of the executive team.



ACTION

In 2017, Maliasili focused support on MMWCA's fundraising strategy, in concert with other partners. This contributed to MMWCA securing a number of major new grants and significantly diversifying its overall funding portfolio and network (Figure 3).

Maliasili has also worked extensively with MMWCA's leadership to put in place foundational management systems related to work planning, human resources, and performance management, testing and adapting these to suit the needs of a young and growing organization.

“MMWCA could only have achieved the levels of effectiveness and performance that it has because of the organizational support from Maliasili; it gave us clarity of purpose, method and function that we never would have had otherwise.”

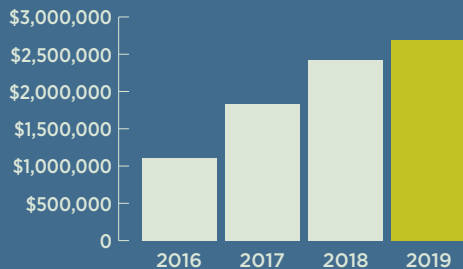
—Calvin Cottar, Cottar's Safaris and Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association Board Member



Since 2016, MMWCA's budget has more than doubled, from \$1.1 million to over \$2.6 million (2019), while its staffing has also expanded both at the management and the field level.

As MMWCA's organizational capacity has grown, it has also been able to expand its impact on the ground. The number of conservancies and area under conservancies in the Mara has expanded by 87.5% and 47%, respectively, since 2015 (Figures 4 and 5), and overall conservancy income from lease payments reached \$4.8 million to over 14,000 landowners in 2019.

Fig 3 | MMWCA Expenditure



LION NUMBERS ARE 14% HIGHER



on conservancies around the Mara than inside the Maasai Mara National Reserve itself, and lion populations in these conservancies are at some of the highest densities of all of Africa.

Source: Elliot, N. B., & Gopalaswamy, A. M. (2017). Toward accurate and precise estimates of lion density. *Conservation Biology*, 31(4), 934-943.

CONSERVANCY GROWTH 2015-2019

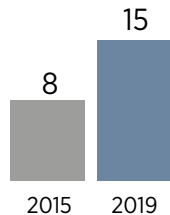


Fig 4 | Number of Mara Conservancies

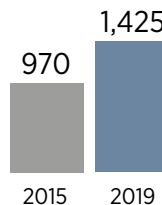


Fig 5 | Area under conservancies (km²)

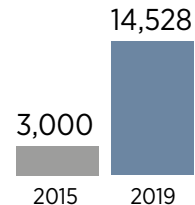


Fig 6 | Number of landowners



South Rift Association of Land Owners

SORALO | COMMUNITIES AND CONSERVATION IN THE SOUTH RIFT

Another pioneering grassroots organization supporting community-based conservation in a key Kenyan landscape is the South Rift Association of Land Owners (SORALO). SORALO operates across around two million hectares of rangeland in the South Rift Valley, focusing on helping pastoralist communities to maintain communal land uses and foster the co-existence of wildlife and livestock. SORALO's work particularly focuses on integrating traditional indigenous land and resource management practices with more modern land use management systems, working to maintain Maasai cultural values and livelihoods alongside the region's spectacular landscapes and biodiversity.

ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

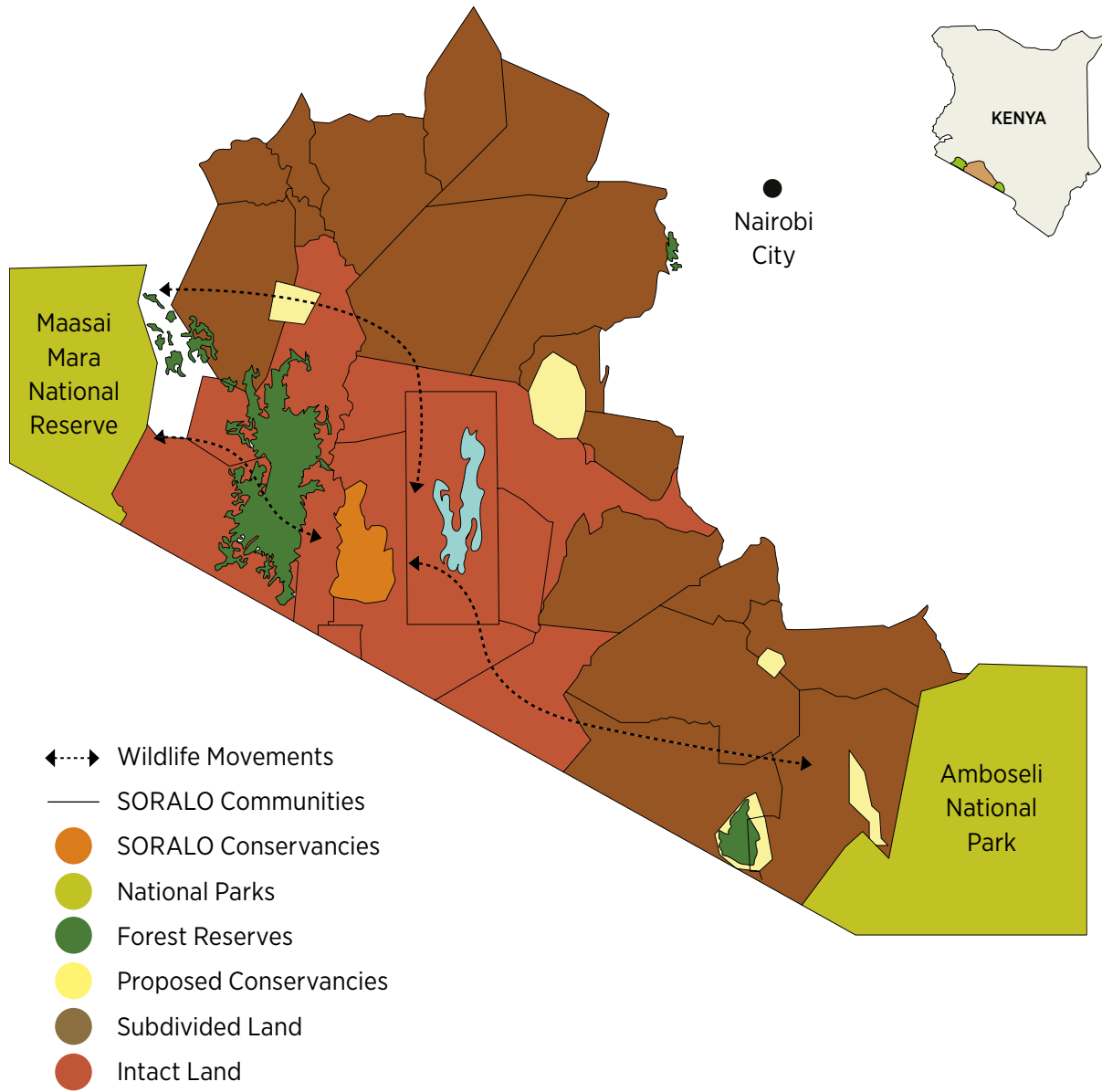
Maliasili's support to SORALO also began in late 2015 and has covered a comprehensive suite of organizational development support during the past four years.

STRATEGY

A key milestone in support of SORALO was facilitating SORALO's new strategic plan and a clearer impact model (pictured on page 14). The strategic plan helped SORALO clarify their core purpose and what they do in order to foster co-existence of wildlife, people, and livestock in the South Rift. It clarified their ultimate goal as being to keep community land intact so that key grazing areas that both livestock and wildlife depend on are maintained. This has given

SORALO a much greater emphasis in their work on land use and governance, so that communally-managed lands can be secured and protected from the fragmentation spreading across Kenya's rangelands.







SORALO'S IMPACT MODEL

Governance: People are able to secure rights over communal lands, water, and resources.



Management: People are able to monitor, manage and protect wildlife and other resources.



Livelihoods: People are able to generate benefits and income from natural resources.



Culture: People retain the cultural values that promote co-existence and communal resource uses.



Local communities' decisions and actions maintain a healthy and connected landscape for people and wildlife

A healthy and intact landscape that sustains pastoralist communities and wildlife

The biodiversity, culture and natural resources of Kenya's Maasai-owned rangelands conserved by local communities for local, national, and global benefit and heritage.



PEOPLE

SORALO's Executive Director and Research Coordinator also participated in the first African Conservation Leadership Network program in 2016/17. One outcome of their participation was refining the organizational structure and the roles and responsibilities within the leadership team. The leadership program also helped SORALO strengthen collaboration with other organizations operating in neighboring landscapes, such as Lion Guardians and MMWCA.



ACTION

Building from its strategic plan, Maliasili has assisted SORALO to develop organizational work plans that assign key goals to members of the team and an overarching management framework for SORALO's work.

Maliasili has also provided significant support to SORALO's core communications platforms, including helping it to develop core messages, overhaul its brand, and develop key new products such as new, high-quality annual reports and regular newsletters. These have helped SORALO build its brand and networks, and supported expanded fundraising and networking efforts.



The combination of a new strategic plan and the leadership training (ACLN) has been a game-changer for SORALO. We have grown our leadership skills and perspectives within our landscape, started to appreciate that we had to scale our work, and through our strategy, we knew how to do this. A clearer strategy and greater focus on communications has helped us articulate and tell SORALO's story better, to our own teams, our communities and our donors and partners."

—John Kamanga, Executive Director, SORALO





Over the past two years, SORALO's greater strategic focus, new collaborations, and improved brand and communications capacity have helped it attract new resources from funders such as the Wildlife Conservation Network (Lion Recovery Fund), National Geographic and IUCN.

SORALO's strategic priorities and the development of new resources and partnerships is enabling SORALO to scale up its work and coverage of the landscape, with work on over one million hectares of community land enabled through newly secured project funding.

This is bringing SORALO's focus of connecting the Maasai Mara ecosystem to the west, and the Amboseli ecosystem to the east, much closer to reality. With greater emphasis on land tenure

and land use planning, SORALO is now working to help communities across their landscape to navigate changes in land use and governance and maintain the values the land provides for both livestock and wildlife.

Published research released in 2019 shows that lion densities in community lands in the South Rift where SORALO works are some of the highest outside protected areas of anywhere in Kenya - roughly 6 lions/100 km².



SCALING UP & NEXT STEPS

The success of conservancies in Kenya is largely tied to an emerging set of new leaders and young organizations working from the grassroots to the national scale. KWCA and Maliasili work together to further build the capacity and strengthen the impact of additional regional conservancy associations, according to their own needs and emergence in different landscapes around the country. By working to build this new generation of Kenyan conservation leadership, conservancies can bring about durable conservation approaches where wildlife and people co-exist and put the country's wildlife back on the road to recovery, while providing inspiration for other conservation efforts around Africa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Maliasili's support of KWCA, MMWCA and SORALO has been supported by The Nature Conservancy and the BAND Foundation. Additional support for Maliasili's work with MMWCA has come from the Climate Justice Resilience Fund.



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