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Maasai Community Leader Oloibon Ole Simel presenting a Social Contract on behalf of communities to the Cabinet Secretary Environment and Natural Resources Prof. Judi Wakhungu and Narok County Assembly Speaker Ololtisati Kamwaro.

## KENYA

### COMMUNITY CONSERVANCY POLICY SUPPORT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

#### *The Nature Conservancy and Kenya Wildlife Conservancy Association*

Kenya's globally significant eco-regions are facing direct threats. Insecure land and resource rights, poor land-use planning, weak governance systems, human-wildlife conflicts, lack of conservation incentives, limited inclusion of women and youth, and vulnerability to climate change and other shocks are among the underlying drivers of these threats to biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being.

Conservation of these eco-regions relies not only on government-managed protected areas but also on conservation on private and community lands. Community and private conservancies in Kenya represent a great opportunity. In the last three decades, Kenya saw a remarkable growth in the number and types of conservancies implementing a variety of conservation strategies, such as law enforcement, ecotourism, species protection and water management. Although private conservation is a movement in its early stages, more than 3 million hectares of land have been conserved, providing important connectivity for biodiversity across entire eco-regions and between parks and community lands. Improved security, living standards, social cohesion, education and health are tangible benefits of community conservancies. While these conservancies are implementing a range of conservation strategies, they face policy and institutional barriers to effectively carrying out their biodiversity conservation and sustainable-development mandates.

With support from USAID, the Community Policy Support and Implementation Program implemented by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) facilitates communities and landowners' participation in policy review processes and better access to policy information and incentives. The program seeks to address policy barriers inhibiting development of conservancies by promoting a supportive legal environment that encourages sustainable and beneficial conservation.

Analyzing, standardizing and facilitating policy change through this program will create an environment in which conservancies can deliver long-term, sustainable social, economic and ecological outcomes, including improved structures for governance and management of community land and secure land ownership rights, better living standards, gender and youth inclusiveness and resilience to climate change.

### ACTIVITY AREAS

The Community Conservancy Policy Support and Implementation Program works with communities and landowners spread across 12 landscape-based regional wildlife conservancies associations, representing approximately 140 private and community-based conservancies in 25 counties in Kenya. The program's target is to benefit over 2,200 community scouts and over 150,000 landowners. TNC and KWCA are working to 1) improve land and resource policy, 2) improve community governance systems, 3) increase conservation incentives, 4) increase inclusion of women and youths for more equitable distribution of conservancy benefits, and 5) increase resilience to climate change and other external shocks affecting community conservancies.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

TNC and KWCA are building the capacity of community conservancies to participate in policy reforms that directly affect their operations. The program has made tremendous achievements in the following areas:

- Mobilized community conservancy views and influence in the formulation of key legislation, including the Community Land Bill, the Land Law amendment bill and the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act (WCMA), and regulations under the WCMA.
- Better land-tenure security including the recognition, protection and registration of land, all of which are a precursor to long-term involvement in conservancy establishment and management
- Rolled out a variety of organization-development tools to enhance service delivery to community conservancies and stronger networking and communication among key stakeholder groups to diversify conservancy benefits, minimize conflicts and optimize best practices.
- The program is working on key strategies to enhance incentives for conservancy development including a tool box for land planning, market oriented economic incentives and sustainable finance instruments. These tools will give conservancies the opportunity to transform species, their habitats and ecosystem functions into valuable assets that yield returns to their families.

#### Total Project Funding Level:

\$2,200,336

#### Total USAID Kenya Funding Contribution:

\$2,000,000

#### Duration

September 2015 – September 2019

#### Implementing Partner:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) & Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA)

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