



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Maasai women at MMWCA's 10 Year Anniversary Celebration. *Photo Credit: USAID*

KENYA

CONSERVATION OF THE MAASAI MARA LANDSCAPE

Kenya's Maasai Mara is the country's most important wildlife and tourism area. It holds a quarter of the country's wildlife and is also home to a pastoral community of over 200,000. The Maasai Mara has found great success employing the "community conservancy" model which protects wildlife, sustains communities, and propels a thriving tourism industry. However, the Mara landscape remains critically threatened by many challenges, including a lack of connectivity, and shrinking wildlife habitats; the lack of an adequate landscape monitoring system and uncoordinated data collection; poor livestock management practices; climate change effects; and deep inequities in the distribution of conservancy benefits, with women and youth being disadvantaged by the land tenure system and other aspects of gender inequality.

The Conservation of the Maasai Mara Landscape activity is working with five local partners, including conservation, community health, gender empowerment, and indigenous people's rights organizations, to increase the resilience of the Mara landscape for wildlife conservation and community well-being. In addition to addressing conservation challenges like human-wildlife conflict and shrinking wildlife corridors, the activity seeks to strengthen conservancies to complement government efforts in addressing social challenges related to health, education, livelihood opportunities, and gender-based violence.

OBJECTIVES

Several activities are being implemented to support the following project objectives:

- I. Secure and sustain biodiversity through locally led organizations and strategic partnerships.
- II. Enhance economic development and sustainable revenue streams for livelihood sustenance in the Mara region.
- III. Enhance gender equality and women empowerment, including, but not limited to, combatting gender-based violence and female genital mutilation.
- IV. Promote indigenous people's rights.

ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

- I. Capacity strengthening of the Mara's 24 existing conservancies and support for the creation of 5 additional conservancies.
- II. Coordinating the implementation of the Greater Mara Monitoring Framework
- III. Improving human-wildlife conflict prevention, mitigation, and response measures
- IV. Establishing women and youth-led nature-based enterprises
- V. Increasing women's participation across conservation platforms and transforming harmful gender norms through community engagement initiatives
- VI. Promoting the adoption of human rights and Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) practices across all conservancies
- VII. Creating platforms to advance and protect indigenous knowledge systems through documenting, storing, and integrating this knowledge into modern conservation platforms.

POPULATION HEALTH ENVIRONMENT APPROACH

The integrated Population-Health-Environment (PHE) approach aims to increase access to health services—particularly family planning and reproductive health, while supporting communities to conserve the ecosystems and natural resources upon which they depend. Given that the Greater Maasai Mara Ecosystem is not only one of Kenya's most critical landscapes of ecological significance, but also has some of the country's highest rates of adolescent pregnancy, maternal mortality, and gender-based violence, it is a relevant geography for a PHE approach that advances health, livelihoods, and conservation outcomes. This is the first activity in the Mara to take a truly integrated approach.

BUDGET: USD \$6.5M

DURATION

November 2023 - October 2028

ACTIVITY LOCATION

Maasai Mara Community Conservancies in Narok County

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Maasai Mara Wildlife and Conservancies Association (MMWCA)
Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW)
Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA)
Community Health Partners
Mara Elephant Project

MISSION CONTACT

Anna Ghnouly
Program Manager
Cell: +254-704-852-032
Email: aghnouly@usaid.gov

PARTNER CONTACT

Eric Reson
Program Manager
Tel: +254-700-028375
Email: eric@maraconservancies.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email: usaidkea@usaid.gov
Website: www.usaid.gov/kenya
Facebook: USAIDKenya
Twitter: @USAIDKenya