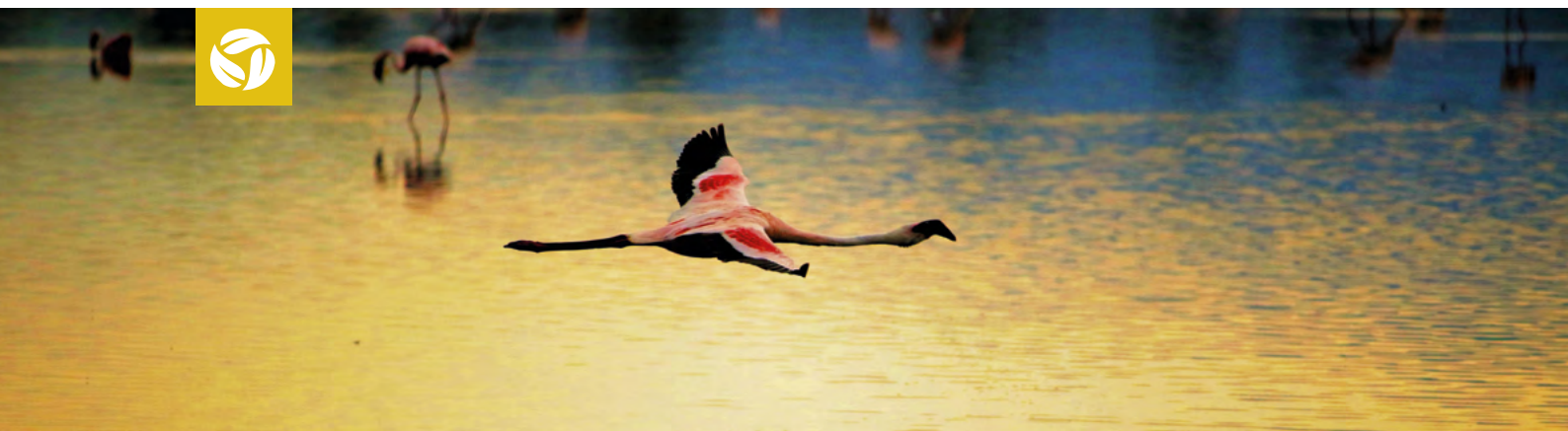


SORALO

South Rift Association of Land Owners

Annual Report 2017





SORALO

South Rift Association of Land Owners

We want to see a healthy and intact landscape that sustains pastoralist communities and wildlife.

Protecting Open Rangelands
Conserving Coexistence
Cultural Leadership
Conservation Livelihoods



Dear Friends and colleagues,

I'm so pleased to introduce SORALO's first-ever annual report. This report is significant not only because it shares some of our great work and achievements both in 2017 and over the past decade, but it also signifies a sort of coming of age for SORALO. Over the past couple of years we have come a long way as an organisation, both in terms of our work on the ground but also in taking time to reflect on our internal systems and build our team. We are very proud of our governance work related to land use planning, water shed management and sharing of our stories through multiple community exchanges and scientific publications. Now we feel is the time to take that work to another level, and to do so we are looking inwards.

We have recently completed a new strategic plan to help take our work to a new level of impact and clarity.

Thanks to support from Maliasili, we now have a clearer idea of where we would like to be in three years' time, and a roadmap to get there, which we are excited to share in this report. Our priorities include supporting the development and implementation of land use plans and other appropriate measures that secure communal land through participatory processes with more of our member communities, establishing an effective communications network to support rangers and other wildlife management bodies and finalising the formation and implementation of the Pastoral Cultural Conservation Leadership Programme among others things.

As part of our growth, we are also re-branding ourselves and have a new logo and communication materials, showcased here for the first time.

Finally, we are proud to say that the number of partners and collaborators for SORALO is growing. I would like to sincerely thank our partners who have enabled us to get this far and we look forward to many more years together, keeping the landscape of the South Rift healthy and intact for our communities and our wildlife.

Sincerely,
John Kamanga, Executive Director

OUR PURPOSE & APPROACH

Much of SORALO's approach can be summed up by two Maasai words, each with deep cultural meanings:

<p>Enkop'ang </p> <p>Roughly translates as 'our good land, our common identity, our common pride'</p>	<p>Erematare </p> <p>Roughly translates as 'stewardship over common resources'</p>
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Combining these two concepts provides the basis for SORALO's purpose within the South Rift landscape.

A culture and place at risk

Kenya's South Rift Valley lies within East Africa's most wildlife rich areas. This landscape is a place where, for centuries, the Maasai people have lived and have kept intact, benefiting themselves, their livestock and wildlife. The area is still home to the majority of Kenya's Maasai, but today it is a threatened landscape, confronting a growing population, a culture in transition, and land use changes that threaten critical wildlife habitat.

Working towards a better future

SORALO's ultimate vision is a healthy and intact landscape that sustains pastoralist communities and wildlife.

The South Rift Association of Land Owners (SORALO) represents the Maasai pastoralist communities of Kenya's South Rift Valley region. Our work covers an area of just over 1 million hectares comprising southern Kenya's last remaining lands where significant communal landholdings remain intact, traditional pastoralist rangelands governance systems continue to function, and livestock and wildlife continue to co-exist across large areas. The landscape provides a critical bridge between the Amboseli ecosystem to the east and the Maasai Mara to the west, and it lies immediately north of Lake Natron and Ngorongoro in Tanzania. Our primary role is to ensure the integrity of this landscape for the benefit of people and wildlife.

For over a decade, SORALO has been a leader in community-based conservation in this part of southern Kenya, supporting the development of a wide range of initiatives targeting wildlife conservation, cultural preservation, and land use and management. We've played a key role in the continued co-existence of people and wildlife in this landscape by building on local customs to strengthen natural resource management in the face of new challenges.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

To achieve our vision, we focus on addressing four key areas of intervention, each in turn supported by sound science and accurate information:

-  Improving rangelands governance by securing communal lands, water and natural resources through appropriate local tenure arrangements.
-  Improving natural resource management and conservation to monitor, manage and protect wildlife and other resources.
-  Generating benefits and increased income through sustainable natural resource-based enterprises that improve local livelihoods and create incentives for conservation.
-  Promoting cultural values and practices that promote co-existence of people and wildlife.

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.



These four interventions not only form our Theory of Change for achieving our vision and mission, but also form the structure of SORALO's programmes and thus governs how we implement our work.

ACHIEVEMENTS OVER A DECADE

Over the past decade, there are a number of key achievements that serve to establish SORALO's track record of impact across the South Rift landscape:



Keeping land intact



Supported the establishment of community conservancies (Olkiramatian, Shompole, Suswa) and continue to support their management and security systems; supported land use planning (Naroosura and Elengata Enterit); initiating conservation efforts in Loita, Mailwa/Maparasha, Olorgesailie and Empaash, all of which has helped keep range-lands open, benefiting people and wildlife in the landscape.

Facilitating community tourism partnerships



Facilitated 3 community / tour operator partnerships (Lentorre Lodge, Shompole Wilderness and currently working to re-establish the Shompole Lodge partnership), helping ensure fair community benefits and bringing value to wildlife.

Securing landscape resource security



Established a landscape security network of game scouts, providing local employment and protecting both wildlife and livestock.

Improving governance of common resources



Supported conservation area management systems, established Water Resource Users Associations and Sub-Catchment Management Plans in Olorte, Nguruman and developed a community land constitution for the Olkiramatian community, guided by the new community land Act 2016, which has ensured the future security of the land use plans, development projects and governing frameworks supporting this community.

Supporting national strategy and policy development



Awarded the tender in conjunction with WildCRU (Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit) to conduct the National Lion and Spotted Hyena strategy (ongoing in 2018); and facilitated heavy community input into the Wildlife Strategy and dissemination of Community Land Act regulations, all of which aims to bring about a more favourable environment for wildlife and people to coexist.



Enhancing learning through the Lale'enok Resource Centre



Developed a centre of learning and excellence, where SORALO uses science to prove that Maasai land use practices help keep this ecosystem viable and coexistence possible (3 papers published in peer reviewed journals); hosted thousands of visitors from across the world, and shared the principles of coexistence, nurturing conservation leaders locally, nationally and internationally.

Supporting conservation livelihoods



SORALO communities earn over \$65,000 a year through SORALO's tourism and research related partnerships from both business opportunities and philanthropic support from our visitors.

Promoting cultural leadership



Hosted 2 Maasai festivals, establishing a Maasai cultural heritage centre, developing Pastoral Conservation Leadership Course, nurturing local conservation leaders and heroes (Stand up for Nature film series), all of which aim to perpetuate cultural and ecological pride among the SORALO communities, leading to more investment and dedication to protecting the landscape.

Growing our partnerships



SORALO has established partnerships with a number of great organizations and collaborators, including PRISE, ILRI, UON, Mara Beef, Mara Training Centre, IUCN ESARO, KWSTI, Smithsonian Institute, and WildCRU.

2017 HIGHLIGHTS



Protecting Open Rangelands



A key step to protecting the SORALO landscape is to keep its rangelands open and intact. Thus, our work is increasingly focused on helping communities to develop land use plans and other land management tools to do just this.

The case of Naroosura

In 2016, group ranch officials in Naroosura, a community on the edge of the Loita Forest in Narok District, asked SORALO to help them develop land use plans ahead of demarcation for subdivision. The community recognised that the pressures to subdivide was imminent but that poor planning of this process would leave the community in a vulnerable position in terms of access to resources that were previously common, such as grazing and water as they had witnessed on the neighbouring ranch.

SORALO led a community-based process of resource mapping whilst at the same time assisted the community to develop part of the group ranch (a former livestock holding area) into a grass bank for an improved cattle breeding programme and also to establish community water management structures. The reason SORALO wanted to combine resource planning with economic opportunities for the community was to offer additional value in keeping the space protected, corridors for cattle and wildlife opened and resources well governed.

"We are so thankful for SORALO because were it not for them maybe by now we would have cut all our land into pieces separated by fences thus denying us all access even to the most basic resources, such as water from the river."

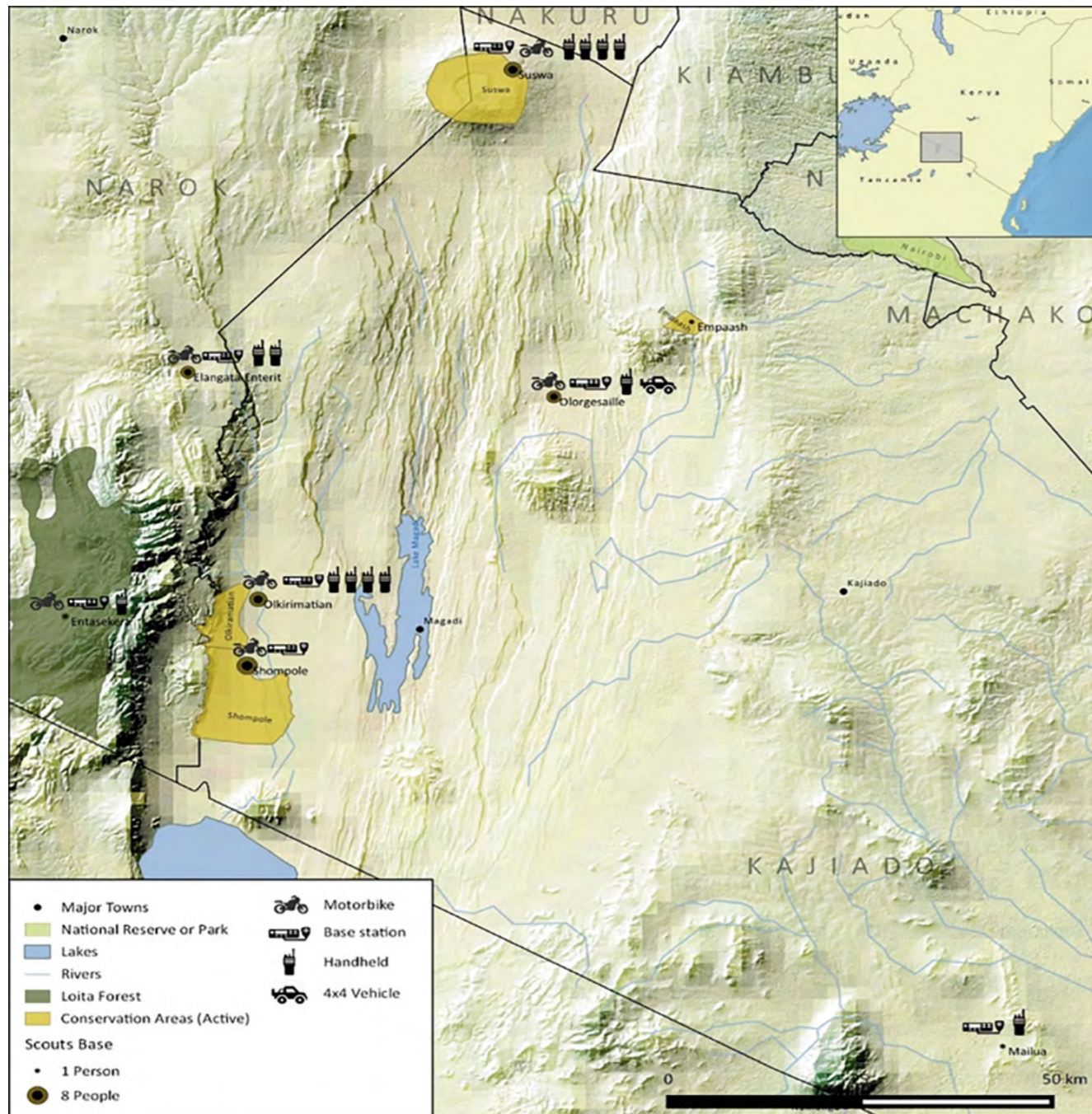
—Chief Ole Muntet, Naroosura Group Ranch

Across the landscape, a large density and diversity of wildlife coexists alongside Maasai pastoral people and their livestock. Protecting people from wildlife, and wildlife from people is an integral part of maintaining this coexistence. Not only is it important to maintain a landscape of traditional tolerance for wildlife, particularly problem species such as predators and elephants, but also to maintain an intolerance for the illegal trade in wildlife.

SORALO combines both an understanding of the traditional mechanisms of coexistence with more law enforcement strategies. SORALO's 33 community game scouts, trained by KWS in wildlife protection, combine with our Rebuilding the Pride resource assessors conduct patrols to prevent and protect both people and wildlife. This combination brings local knowledge and cultural understanding to work with the arm of the law where necessary.

Conserving Coexistence





Map 1. Shows the distribution of conservancies, security outposts and security resources across the SORALO landscape.

The case of Shompole and Olkiramatian

“Throughout Africa lions are running out of space due to human encroachment. In Shompole and the surroundings they continue to coexist, and seeing a new litter of cubs, I am overwhelmed by what is possible. It reminds me that coexistence is really possible and that lions do not need to decline for humans to thrive, at least not in the South Rift.”

—Greg du Toit, wildlife photographer and SORALO conservation ambassador

Within the Shompole and Olkiramatian ecosystem a combination of approaches have been implemented over the past few years, now housed under the new brand of ‘Conserving Coexistence’.

Our *Mobile Monitoring Unit* comprises a mixture of carnivore resource assessors from the Rebuilding the Pride team and local community Game Scouts who camp and conduct foot patrols in strategic locations across the ecosystem to monitor carnivore movements. They choose to be based in areas which are suffering from high potential or actual conflicts between livestock and carnivores.

Our *Rapid Response Unit* comprises also of both Rebuilding the Pride resource assessors and community Game Scouts but is a vehicle-based response system, responding to actual human wildlife conflict events and includes armed rangers from the local Kenya Wildlife Service when necessary.

Working together, these units collect and share information with the local communities to warn against possible areas of high carnivore presence and respond to cases of lost livestock thus proactively preventing possible conflict events and helping to ensure the safety of herders and search parties. In cases of actual wildlife damage, they respond appropriately, offering both emotional and technical support.

In 2017 the Rapid Response team was deployed over 50 times, attended 32 conflict incidents and help recover over 40 lost livestock. Over the same period the Mobile Monitoring Unit spent a total 63 days camping in 15 different settlement areas across Shompole, Olkiramatian and Oldonyo Nyokie group ranches. Walking blocks were also used to track carnivore movements in areas of the Shompole and Olkiramatian conservancies where there is the highest possibility of human-carnivore interaction. The team conducted 260 walking blocks covering a total distance of over 1700 km on foot.

Based on collective discussion with the Olkiramatian and Shompole communities the Rapid Response Team and Mobile Monitoring Unit have also taken additional measures to try prevent Olamayio hunts (lion hunts conducted by Maasai warriors). These hunts had previously been banned upon the initial establishment of the conservancies, but it was felt that the younger generations of warriors needed reminding of this agreement.





Table 1. A list of SORALO’s main areas of operation and base stations, indicating the size of the area under protection and the number of community game scouts located at each site

CONSERVANCY / BASE STATION	APPROX AREA	STAFF
SHOMPOLE	100,000 hectares	7 scouts
OLKIRAMATIAN	43,000 hectares	7 scouts
OLORGESAILIE	6,000 hectares	3 scouts
SUSWA	8,000 hectares	6 scouts
EMPAASH	4,000 hectares	1 scout
NAROOSURA/ELENGATA ENTERIT	30,000 hectares	4 scouts
LOITA	47,000 hectares	4 scouts
NAMANGA	85,000 hectares	1 scout
TOTAL	321,00 hectares	33 scouts

Combining Science with Community Conservation

A valuable strength of SORALO’s is combining strong grassroots presence and community relationships with world-class science. SORALO uses research to inform community management practices as well as to inform the development of community-based conservation strategies across Kenya, and even globally. Some examples of this work recently:

Seasonal movements of wildlife and livestock in a heterogeneous pastoral landscape: Implications for coexistence and community-based conservation, published in *Global Ecology and Conservation* (2017)

This study modelled population abundance to predict wildlife and livestock abundance across the Olkiramatian and Shompole ecosystem. The study supports SORALO’s overall approach and goals by concluding:

‘In Kenya, conservation outside of government protected areas has long been focused on incentives from tourism funded community-based conservancies (Western et al., 2015b). A complementary mechanism, displayed by our example here, is the maintenance of good grazing management, and forage resource heterogeneity, both temporally and spatially, as a tool for both livestock production and subsequently indirect conservation of wildlife. Community-based conservation initiatives which plan around the principles of livestock and grazing management, to maintain and exploit resource heterogeneity, could facilitate wildlife-livestock coexistence by providing critical resource space for wildlife (Fynn et al., 2016).’

Seasonal interactions of wildlife and pastoralists in relation to pasture in an African Savanna ecosystem, published in *Journal of Arid Environments* (2018)

The second publication further support the arguments made in the first paper. This analysis of a decade of research in the Shompole and Olkiramatian ecosystem illustrates that this ecosystem supports coexistence of wildlife and livestock through traditional livestock management systems which focus on moving between designated wet and dry seasons grazing areas, thus ensuring available grazing throughout the year. It further highlights the importance of good traditional governance systems.

‘Our results provide evidence to support the notion that traditional pastoral systems which continue to manage for heterogeneity of pasture can still support not only livestock but also substantial numbers of wildlife. The results highlight the need for wildlife and livestock to retain both mobility and access to both wet and dry season areas to maintain ecosystem resilience and promote coexistence in mixed livestock-wildlife landscapes.’

A biodiversity assessment of terrestrial vertebrates in Naimina Enkiyio Forest, Kenya, published in *African Journal of Ecology* (2018)

The Naimina Enkiyio Forest (the Forest of the Lost Child) in the Loita region of SORALO’s landscape, is a sacred forest of major spiritual and cultural importance to Maasai culture and access to its resources is governed by the local community. It is possibly one of the few remaining intact, non-coastal, forests in Kenya with high levels of biodiversity. The results of the camera trap survey indicated that there were 20 species of medium to large sized vertebrates captured during the three-month camera trap survey including seven different species of Carnivore and three species of Primate. In addition, four species; lion, serval, hippopotamus and eland were sighted and/or captured on additional cameras. In total, four species found in Naimina Enkiyio Forest are classified as Vulnerable by the IUCN; leopard, lion, hippopotamus and elephant indicating how critical of an area it is for wildlife protection.

Guy Western, head of SORALO's Conserving Coexistence programme, completed his doctoral thesis at the end of 2017. Three key findings emerge from these publications, which demonstrate that coexistence between lions and humans can be both desirable and achievable.

Maasai communities in southern Kenya expressed a strong desire for lion populations to be maintained.



Lions living within pastoral rangelands in Kenya's South Rift Valley maintained home ranges comparable in size to those found in protected areas, and range size was unaffected by seasonal changes in human settlement and livestock. This demonstrates that the community management systems of the South Rift landscape continue to provide high-quality lion habitat.



Pastoralists living in Olkiramatian and Shompole areas willingly grazed in areas of known lion presence to attain better pasture. Their use of traditional ecological knowledge and traditional livestock herding helped them to do so. When lion depredations did occur, guarding of livestock at pasture disrupted attacks resulting in reduced mortality of livestock.



What does this all mean?

We believe that SORALO has demonstrated that, at least within the South Rift landscape, coexistence between wildlife and livestock is not only possible, but it is desirable and achievable. SORALO will continue to guide its constituent communities to strive to maintain this coexistence for the future.



The Lale'enok Resource Centre in Olkiramatian is SORALO's centre for learning. Owned by a local Olkiramatian womens group, the centre is the primary base for community-based research in the South Rift as well as for sharing of the communities' conservation story. Many of the centre's research assistants, resource assessors and visitors have gone on to hold positions of both local and national leadership, taking with them an understanding of the complexities of landscape conservation.

Cultural Leadership



SORALO believes that the conservation mindset is formed and adapted early on in life and that the future of the landscape rests to a large extent on the coming generations and on their understanding not only of their traditional coexistence mechanisms but also of the challenges that lie ahead. Through the Lale'enok Resource centre, SORALO works with 370 children across Wildlife Clubs of 5 schools within the Olkiramatian and Shompole group ranches.

"Maasai elders have vast indigenous knowledge and their assistance is critical in helping is achieve our goals. The younger generation have lost ways of learning and acquiring such valuable knowledge from the elders and such forums serve as training sessions for them to learn from their elders".

—Joel Njonjo, Education Outreach Coordinator

Once a year, the clubs perform conservation-related dances, poems and stories at the centre, in front of an audience of their community and international visitors.

In 2017 Lale'enok hosted, and thus shared the SORALO conservation story, with over 180 people from across the globe, including America, Canada, China, Nigeria, Ireland, Sweden, France and Italy as well as from closer to home in Amboseli and from Nairobi. Even closer to home, over a 100 local school children visit the centre over year to learn more about the conservation story ongoing in their own home.



Conservation Livelihoods

SORALO recognises that the primary stewards of wildlife and the SORALO landscape itself are the communities who live there. But stewardship can come at a cost, and so part of SORALO's work is to ensure the benefits outweigh those costs. Over the past decade, SORALO has been involved, to varying extents, with assisting the communities of the South Rift to benefit from their natural resources.

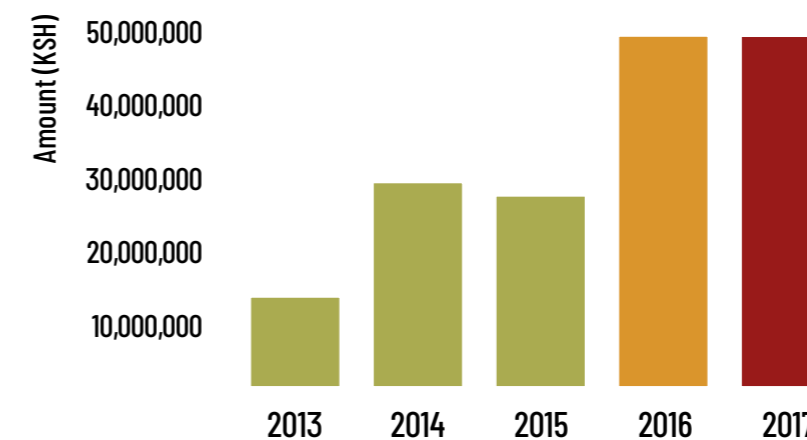
Location of group	Group membership	Core business	SORALO support in 2017, and Impact
Olorgesailie Womens Group	40	Selling beadwork to visitors to the Museum. Collaborating with US fashion designer Tereneh Mosely of Idia'Dega	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donation of beads worth \$500 and new design ideas to support diversification of products on sale. New designs have sold better so far than old designs. • Supported the relationship with US fashion designer Tereneh Mosely, which has yielded \$3,300 of income to the group in 2017.
Olkiramatian Reto Womens Group	210	Lale'enok resource centre and its spin-off enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped secure \$7,700 income from visiting researchers. • Secured bead sales to CZBG of \$3,000. • Capital injection into Lale'enok of \$8,000 in new tents for expanding accommodation, allowing for increased revenue from more guests.
Shompole Kiliken Womens Group	60	Kiliken Guest House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injected capital (\$4,000) to build additional accommodation and meeting area. • Income of over \$3,000 from visitors to the centre.
Shompole and Olkiramatian conservation committees	Conservation committees representing 6,000 households.	Lentorre Lodge, Shompole Wilderness and Lale'enok Resource Centre, Cattle trading.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income from conservation fees from the three tourism partners of over \$20,000

FINANCES

SORALO received \$504,256 from donors and supporters in 2017. Of this, 36% went to support the salaries of all 52 staff members. A small percentage (1%) went to running the Nairobi office and the rest to supporting field programmes.

DONOR	AMOUNT	USD
HOA CCP	22,778,965	227,790
IUCN _NL	13,368,175	133,682
CZBG	6,689,500	66,895
LCAOF	1,981,300	19,813
ANGEL FUND	1,500,000	15,000
LIVING DESERT	1,000,000	10,000
AKRON ZOO	200,000	2,000
PERSONAL DONATIONS	3,107,689	29,077
TOTAL	50,425,629	504,256

SORALO's Income from 2013 - 2017



THANK YOU

We are grateful for the collaboration and partnership of the following organisations:

ACC, who have been our supporting organisation since our inception, with the additional assistance of their ACC-US office.

CZBG, who have supported our work for over a decade.

PRISE, with whom we partner to understand livestock value chains in the South Rift.

ILRI, with whom we partner to undertake rangeland rehabilitation interventions within the Shompole and Olkiramatian ecosystem.

IUCN ESARO, with whom we partner to understand the theory of change frameworks in the communities' fight against wildlife crime.

MALIASILI, who have helped us grow and develop as leaders and towards a more effective organisation.

WILDCRU, with whom we have partnered to increase our academic and conservation achievements.



We are also grateful to the support of dedicated individuals who believe in and support our work including:

Greg du Toit, our Conservation Ambassador

Rob Walker

Nicole Hanker and her Leopardess Foundation



We are pleased to be part of the following networks, giving us an opportunity to see further, learn more and collaborate effectively:

The African Conservation Leadership Network (ACLN)

The Horn of African Regional Environmental Network (HOAREN)



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