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# TTWCA BULLETIN

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SECOND HALF OF  
2022 AND LOOKING AHEAD TO 2023

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HIGHLIGHTS: JULY-DECEMBER 2022

# *Karibu!*

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Welcome to the third issue of the *TTWCA Bulletin*, a periodic bulletin where we reflect on the conservation efforts across the Tsavo landscape.



The past few years have been truly challenging for communities at the forefront of conservation. The challenges did not ease in 2022. The unrelenting drought from years past continued, leading to a massive loss of livestock and wildlife, and increased human-wildlife conflict, as shared resources, such as water and pasture, dwindled.

Partnerships became crucial in attempts to salvage the situation. We, therefore, are grateful to our members, partners and donors who were at the heart of the strides we made in 2022.

In this third edition of the *TTWCA Bulletin*, we capture our highlights of the second half of 2022, whose overriding theme was the remarkable collaborations that saw us continue to place our best foot forward in our shared duty to safeguard the iconic Tsavo ecosystem.

In case you missed our 2022 mid-year review, you can catch it in [Issue 2](#) of our *TTWCA Bulletin*.

Happy 2023 to you all!

# Boots on the ground



## Enhancing mobility

The Noel season of gifts started in October for TTWCA and its members, with AWF (African Wildlife Foundation) donating a Land Cruiser to the association.

In December, the association received another Land Cruiser plus 20 motorbikes from USAID Kenya in partnership with IFAW (the International Fund for Animal Welfare) through the Sustainable Management of Amboseli and Tsavo Landscape Project.

The donations will greatly enhance TTWCA operations. They will also aid the movement and reach of community rangers in the Tsavo landscape.

The support will better the rangers' routine patrols, improving their ability to detect and prevent poaching and respond to incidents of human-wildlife conflict.

The handover ceremony, held at Lumo Community Wildlife Conservancy, was graced by Ministry of Wildlife PS Sylvia Museiya, IFAW Chief Executive Officer Azzedine Downes and Taita Taveta Governor Andrew Mwadime.

The governor lauded the partners for strengthening the capacity of local organisations, such as TTWCA, to foster a coordinated approach for enhanced local stewardship, benefit sharing and sustainable conservation of wildlife and biodiversity, which plays a key role in generating revenue for the county.





Photo Credit: IFAW

## Supporting inclusivity

Women are the primary land managers in many communities. They till the land in some communities and herd the livestock in others. They also traverse the land to fetch water and collect firewood. Through this, they know the details of the land like the back of their hands.

Founded on this understanding of the resourcefulness women bring to the protection of an ecosystem and the limited opportunities they get to be as involved, IFAW held an all-female ranger empowerment and mentorship training in September.

Eight rangers from the Tsavo landscape took part in the three-day training that brought together rangers from Olgulului Community Wildlife Rangers, Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust, Big Life Foundation and TTWCA.

It was an all-inclusive training that imparted knowledge on personal development, self-care, team dynamics and balancing their role in security and in their families.



### Radio boost

Two 100-foot masts were constructed in TTWCA members Mgeno Conservancy and Taita Ranch in September as part of the second phase of the radio installation.

These are essential infrastructure that support specific equipment, such as antennae and repeater radios, for improved signal transmission in the landscape.

The construction was part of TTWCA's continuous quest to support communication between rangers in their crucial patrol work that not only protects wildlife but also improves the security of the community they serve.

### Wildfires vigilance

The Tsavo Conservation Area is prone to wildfires, which become an even bigger threat during severe dry conditions like the drought that has ravaged the landscape in recent years.

TWCA provided a tractor and grader that facilitated the maintenance of up to 164 kilometres of cutlines and boundaries between August and October across three ranches: Mgeno, Kambanga and Kasigau.

This keeps the landscape accessible, enabling ease of movement and disruption of the spread should a fire outbreak occur.

## County spatial plan revived



TTWCA, in partnership with IFAW, held the Taita Taveta Environmental Coordination initiative (TTECi) in November.

TTCEi is an initiative under the Sustainable Management of the Amboseli and Tsavo Landscapes project.

The meeting focused on the development of the Taita Taveta County Spatial Plan in accordance with the County Government Act of Kenya, which requires county governments to implement a 10-year geographic information system (GIS-based) county spatial plan.

Also in attendance were developmental partners AWF, WWF-Kenya, Nature Kenya, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, Wildlife Works, Tsavo Trust, SNV Netherlands Development Organisation and the Taita Taveta County Government—chair of the TTECi.

Speaking during the meeting, Governor Andrew Mwadime appreciated the revival of the development of the plan, which began in December 2020.

“The spatial plan is one of the priority areas for my government,” he said, adding that his administration has committed Ksh10 million towards the development of the plan.

“It will help promote the economic development of the entire county, shaping the framework for the development of county policies and addressing the negative effects of climate change.”

The development partners present reiterated their support, which will include the provision of data, technical expertise, capacity building and other budgetary resources.

# Tsavo–Mara governance training

The board members of Mbale Ranch joined the leadership of Orpua and Mara Mbokishi conservancies in a governance training to strengthen the governance structures of community wildlife conservancies in the Tsavo and Maasai Mara ecosystems.

The training was organised by KWCA (Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association) in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife through the financial support of UNDP-GEF. It focused on the vital role good governance plays in accountability, decision-making, conservation, distribution of conservation benefits and realisation of the community conservancy's strategic goals.



## Kasigau's transition to community land

TTWCA teamed up with KWCA in October to organise a workshop for Kasigau Group Ranch on the transition of land into community land as per the Community Land Act of 2016.

More than 50 community land member representatives from Kasigau Community Land, including its interim Community Land Management Committees, attended the workshop.



They were taken through the procedure and requirements of transitioning to community land and the challenges and concerns that may arise during the process and how to tackle them.

The members were also equipped with the principles of good governance and management of communal land and how to safeguard their land's tenure.

## Pasture value chain workshop

TTWCA, in partnership with FAO (the Food and Agriculture Organisation), conducted an inception workshop on the commercialisation of pasture value chain in Machakos, Kajiado and Taita Taveta counties.

The workshop was part of the Creative Innovative and Sustainable Models for The Feed Industry Project.

The 20 participants, drawn from TTWCA members, were taken through ways to improve the understanding of the project and its objectives by the stakeholders at the county level. They then mapped the project implementation modalities for each county.

Taita Taveta county will focus on three core areas of the project, namely: increasing the production of hay and silage, building the entrepreneurship capacity of producer organisations, and promoting the preservation and utilisation of animal-source foods by livestock farming households.

# Checking up on beekeepers

Nature-based enterprises are one of the key focus areas for TTWCA as we champion improved livelihoods as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Having distributed more than 500 beehives in the past two years, the second half of 2022 commenced with visits to beekeeping groups, reaching out to a membership of 60 (20 men and 40 women) in August and September to see how the beekeepers were faring.



The visits revealed a number of hiccups, including low hive occupancy and honey production caused by factors such as drought, pests (ants and wax moths), poor positioning of hives (a few apiaries needed to be shaded from the direct sun) and destruction of farms by elephants.

One of the key lessons learnt through the process was the importance of extensive training prior to supplying beehives to community members and making sure that only members passionate about beekeeping are incorporated into the programme in the first place for better prospects of success.



## Equipping beekeepers

In October, TTWCA and STE (Save the Elephants) organised a beekeeping training for 12 beekeeping farmers (six women and six men) to tackle the gaps revealed during prior visits to the beekeeping groups.

The four-day training focused on the significance of bees in an ecosystem and incorporated practical sessions on beehive inspection, placement and maintenance. It also covered hive products and honey processing, and tactics such as planting flowers during short rains to provide forage for the bees.

STE also advocated the beehive fence mechanism, which is efficient in preventing elephants from raiding crops.

# Spotlight



November 2022 saw the world say goodbye to one of Africa's largest female tuskers: Dida. She died of old age, having lived a full life of about 60-65 years.

Dida, who resided in Tsavo East National Park, was an iconic matriarch of Tsavo, who had shepherded her herd through many seasons and challenging times.

Her story was captured in various documentaries over the years as she continued to spur interest across the globe.

**Rest Well, Dida.**

Photo Credit: KWS Tsavo Conservation Area



Moses Mulu © infonile.org

## In the media

### Gender in conservancy leadership

TTWCA rangers featured in #USAIDRISE project that is changing the gender stereotypes in conservation leadership.

Watch feature:

<https://youtu.be/xZy5yq6oduY>

### From poacher to protector

The story of Moses Mulu: a former eminent poacher turned community ranger at Marungu Hill Conservancy.

Watch feature:

<https://youtu.be/IdO0xh4Zv5Y>

## In store

**Five things** TTWCA is looking forward to in 2023:

1. Support the growth of the current conservancies and the development of more conservancies in the Tsavo ecosystem.
2. Facilitate more collaborations amongst partners and stakeholders in the Tsavo ecosystem.
3. Launch of the TTWCA five-year strategic plan.
4. Begin the construction of TTWCA's headquarters.
5. Launch of the rangers' security hub.

# About TTWCA

TTWCA is a conservation non-profit organisation that works with conservancies and ranches to safeguard the wildlife, habitats and livelihoods across one million acres in the Tsavo ecosystem, one of the world's last remaining megafauna habitats.



## Our Partners

TTWCA would like to thank our partners for their invaluable support.

**ASANTENI SANA!**



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