



# The Anne K. Taylor Fund

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2022 Annual Report

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# A Note from Anne

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Dear fellow travelers, wildlife lovers,  
& generous supporters,

I hope that this message finds you well and enjoying the beautiful Fall weather. I want to thank you so very much for your continued and generous support which enables us to achieve our goals. You will see from this report that we have had a very active and productive year caring for the wildlife in the Mara, along with the local communities.

The patrol team is as brave, solid, and as dedicated as ever keeping the wildlife safer. Thanks to them, thousands of animals have been saved from horrible deaths. And since the team members are from local communities, the importance of conservation is being spread throughout the Mara.

On the community front, both of our women's projects are changing the lives of women and their families, as the participating women find confidence and independence by helping with family finances.

We continue to be challenged to influence the local communities against age-old traditions of early marriages – and pregnancies – as young as eight years old. This work is difficult to write about; suffice it to say, it is heartbreaking to witness.

As many of you who so kindly support this project know, we donate reusable (washable) sanitary pads, made by our Esidai Women's Group, to thousands of schoolgirls. Additionally, Carol runs health and hygiene workshops for both boys and girls to teach them about their bodies to prevent early sex and pregnancies. It is a taboo subject, so we are bringing it out into the open to protect young girls. Hopefully as the boys grow up, they will be more protective of the girls rather than predatory!

You will see that we have built more toilets at Oliashire and repaired broken down classrooms, erected electric fences (wildlife is long gone from these areas) around two of our three schools to protect them from livestock herds, provided a school lunch program and supported student outings... and so many other activities too numerous to mention!

Thank you again so very much to each of you for your support of our work, without which we would be ineffective. As you know, every penny gets put into the "field" where it belongs. I hope you enjoy reading our report and knowing how much you have helped.

I will soon be heading to Kenya and wish you all a wonderful and festive Holiday Season.

With gratitude and warmest regards from myself and my team,

Anne

# A.K.T.F. Leadership

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*Clockwise from top left:*

- **Anne Kent Taylor**, Director & National Geographic Explorer
- **Elias Kamande**, Patrol Team Leader
- **Caroline Kiugo**, Community Programs Leader
- **Felix Masaku**, Boma Team Leader



# Anti-Poaching

Our AKTF team patrols with local authorities to rescue animals wounded by poachers, to disrupt poaching camps, and to arrest poachers. We work closely with the Mara Conservancy, Angama Foundation, the Kenya Wildlife Service vets, David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, and Mara Elephant Project, and are deeply grateful for our collaboration and mutual efforts on behalf of the people and wildlife of Maasai Mara.

We also search the bush for, and remove, the highly camouflaged wire snares that poachers use to trap and kill animals. The photos on this page show the team removing deadly wire snares that act as nooses to indiscriminately kill wildlife, like the wildebeest in the bottom right image. One poacher apprehended (top right) had amassed 125 kg of illegal bushmeat from zebras.

## Successes in 2022:

- **13 animals rescued**
- **216 snares** retrieved (totaling 7,773 since 2009)
- **18 poaching weapons** retrieved (spears, swords, pangas, & axes)
- **3 poachers** arrested, on patrols with Mara Conservancy





## ANTI-POACHING PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

# Rescuing Wildlife

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The AKTF Patrol Team also scans the Mara for wounded animals. Together with veterinarians from the Kenya Wildlife Service and David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, we locate, tranquilize, and treat wildlife who have been trapped in snares, shot with arrows or spears, poisoned, or otherwise injured.

Our goal is to make the Mara's protected areas truly safe places for wildlife to roam. Some of our more memorable rescues this year have been (clockwise from top left): a baby Cape buffalo separated from its herd, an adult Cape buffalo with an arrow wound, a zebra with an arrow embedded in it (in the pouring rain!), and one of many warthogs. All are doing well now!

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*“For us, there is no resting in our work to save all species of wildlife, iconic or otherwise. We have a duty to protect them, and we continue doing so as a combined effort and in the spirit of conservation.”*

- Elias Kamande, AKTF Patrol Team Leader



## ANTI-POACHING PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

# Deadly Weapons

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Many of the animals we rescue still have remnants of poaching implements in them, needing skillful removal. Poachers use poisoned arrows (top left), spears (bottom left), and of course wire snares (bottom right). This year we were able to recover 18 hunting tools (bows, swords, etc.) in addition to the arrows and snares pictured here.

Treating wildlife that have suffered these attacks means extracting the poaching weapon, cleaning the wound, and injecting medicines to help fight infection (top right). Fortunately, wild animals are very resilient when given a chance, and they return to their herds after treatment.





## ANTI-POACHING PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

# Local Knowledge



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The AKTF Team is comprised primarily of Maasai elders. Because of their respected, trusted, and influential role in the community, we often are the first to receive news of wildlife hunts, injured animals, and human-wildlife conflict. So far this in 2022, the team has responded to **37 reports of wild animal attacks on livestock**. We have worked together since 1999!

When it comes to finding snares, and tracking and rescuing wounded animals, no one is better than the Maasai people who have a deep connection to the Mara. It is their ancestral home. Their knowledge and expertise is what makes AKTF successful when working with both humans and wildlife. The mere presence of our patrol team is a major deterrent to poachers which cannot be quantified.

At a conservation workshop with other local agencies this year, the AKTF Team shared their knowledge with other stakeholders. By collaborating across organizational boundaries, we hope to better address the needs of those people and animals that call the Mara home.





## ANTI-POACHING PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

# A Daring Rescue

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On patrol one day this year, the Team encountered a giraffe whose leg tendons had been slashed by poachers. In order to treat the wounds, we needed to tranquilize the giant animal. Once the giraffe felt the dart hit him, though, he took off running straight for a nearby river. The team sprinted after him, trying to slip a rope around his chest (in order to slow him down), all the while making sure to avoid powerful and dangerous kicks from his legs – any of which could easily kill a man. Despite our best efforts, the giraffe began losing consciousness just as he reached the water, and he slid into the mud.

The rescue effort now had to include keeping the giraffe's head from slipping under the water, lest he drown, while the veterinarians worked on the wounds. It was an incredibly close call, but we managed to do both. Thanks to the quick actions and teamwork of all involved, this beautiful giraffe woke up with a cleaned wound and was able to immediately rejoin his family. And the crocodiles cruising nearby were denied a meal!



# Restoring Habitat

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In order to conserve the dwindling forests surrounding Maasai Mara, AKTF has been working with David Oseko, founder of Greenmade Movement Group in Maasai Mara, and helping students to plant seedlings, which he grows in his tree nursery, at their schools.

This year, we have **planted many hundreds of native trees** near Oolomongi Primary School, the very first school AKTF built, and Oliashire Primary School. These trees, once mature, will help restore local habitats and rainfall patterns, provide shade and fuel for the school, and give students another tangible connection between themselves and their lands.

In addition to re-planting, the AKTF Patrol Team also helps local law enforcement agencies track down and destroy illegal charcoal-making operations, which destroy local forests. This year, we helped **disrupt 47 illegal charcoal kilns**.



BEHIND THE SCENES IN MAASAI MARA:

# Preserving Beauty

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Each year, the Angama Foundation graciously includes AKTF as a beneficiary in “The Greatest Maasai Mara Photographer of the Year” fundraising competition, which they sponsor. And each year, dozens of world class photographers submit stunning images in support of AKTF. We are so grateful to these incredibly talented photographers for supporting us – and to Angama for such a brilliant initiative.

Here are just a few of those world class shots that capture moments of the natural wonder we strive to preserve in Maasai Mara.



# Fortifying Bomas

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Bomas protect Maasai livestock from predators, like lions. This in turn protects predators from retaliation by herders that have lost livestock. AKTF bomas are built (or refurbished) using metal corners and chain-link fencing. These materials will survive the harsh climate of the Mara and last for many years. That is, unless elephants break them down out of frustration over the electric fences now spanning the Mara! When this happens, our team shows up to repair the damage.

These bomas have been made possible through partnerships with National Geographic, Angama Foundation, Eden Wildlife Trust, Adventure Travel Conservation Fund, and Maasai landowners, as well as other donors.

In mid-2022, we transitioned the AKTF Boma Team to the Mara Conservancy, who have integrated predator-proof bomas into their compensation initiatives for herders who have lost livestock to wild predators. We will continue supporting the boma project in Maasai Mara however we can.

## 2022 Achievements:

- **7 bomas constructed** (totaling 868 bomas fortified since 2008)
- **1,540 head of livestock** protected in 2022



# Supporting Schools

AKTF equips rural schools in Maasai Mara, by building water collection systems (top), providing school lunches, digging sanitary latrines (bottom right), clearing playing fields (bottom left), building desks and distributing school supplies, among many other projects.



## 2022 Successes:

- **School lunch program** at Oloolmongi Primary School continues to provide daily nourishment for more than **500 students**
- Two new blocks of **sanitary latrines (three doors for boys and three for girls)** at Oliashire Primary School, is completed despite the difficult terrain (bottom right)
- More 10,000 liter **water tanks and filtration systems** at local schools
- Providing **classroom supplies and sports equipment** to Oloolmongi, Oliashire, and Nailepu schools
- Supporting sports and music teams to **travel to National competitions**
- Protecting schools and children by **installing security fences**





## SCHOOL PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

# Feeding Students

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Many students in rural Maasai Mara walk many miles, for many hours, to school each morning, with nothing more than a cup of tea in their bellies. Their families are often unable to send them with any food for lunch, as well.

AKTF makes sure that students at three rural schools (Oloolmongi, Oliashire, and Nailepu) receive nutritious lunches each day. This helps the students focus on learning, helps maintain their health, and improves attendance – all of which supports their overall success in life.



## SCHOOL PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

# Supplying Classrooms

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AKTF ensures that the schools with which we work have the right textbooks, desks, pens, posters, art materials, and other supplies necessary to engage their studies. These supplies are often expensive and only available in larger cities, meaning that rural families may have great difficulty in obtaining them for their students.

We purchase the materials in Nairobi and transport them to the remote schools, where the teachers help distribute them to students.

We are currently renovating the classrooms at Oliashire – fixing cracked walls, leaking roofs, and broken windows – so that students can have the most comfortable setting possible in which to study with their new materials.



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*“If the school is unable to provide books for the students or the parents cannot afford them, the students are either left empty-handed or must write in old schoolbooks. Thank you, AKTF, for your partnership and commitment to our students and schools by distributing the much-needed stationery and textbooks.”*

- Mr. Karanja, Oliashire Primary School.



## SCHOOL PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

# Kindergarten Graduation

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Oliashire Elementary School, Nailepu Academy and Oloomongi Primary schools all celebrated their graduating kindergartners with elaborate ceremonies. Teachers, parents, community members – including Anne and the AKTF Team – were in attendance.

Education, which makes an enormous difference in people's futures, is so highly valued in Maasai Mara that each academic milestone is proudly and lavishly honored with songs, dancing, and food.



# Community Health

Because menstruation is a taboo subject in Maasai Mara, young women are not taught how to safely manage their periods each month. As a result, female students end up missing a lot of school out of shame or fear of bleeding in class, and they fall behind their male peers.

To address this, the Esidai Women's Group, sponsored by AKTF, have been sewing washable, sanitary pads for girls and women in order to discreetly manage their bleeding. This protection allows girls to attend school all month long and keep up with the rest of their class, and for women to manage their periods in a healthier way. The group has also begun including two pairs of underwear in each kit, due to the lack thereof amongst girls.

Along with distributing the pads, Carol Kiugo, who leads our community development, runs health and hygiene workshops for boys and girls to teach them about their bodies. With these workshops, we are attempting to prevent very young (10 to 11-year-old) girls from becoming pregnant due to ignorance – and girls as young as 8 being married off to older, much older, men!

We recently partnered with Cottars Camp to train the children in six of their local schools. We continue to provide the pads for free as the community cannot afford them.

## 2022 Successes:

- **1,190 menstrual health kits** (4 washable pads, waterproof bag, panties, and package) were distributed to **840 young women at schools**. Health and hygiene workshops were operated at each school.
- Large bags of menstrual health kits were also distributed to local clinics. **We thank Janyne Preston and Lynne Rittener for their personal support in providing kits to the girls.**



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*“The cost of having a period is too high. No parent should have to choose between paying for school fees and buying pads. That’s why I am here today, making these reusable pads. It makes me happy knowing once the pads reach the girls, they will be able to fulfill their potential in their education.”*

- Naserian, Esidai Women Group



## BEHIND THE SCENES WITH WOMEN'S GROUPS

# Empowering Women

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The Esidai Women's Group's successful sewing (pads, masks, and uniforms) and soap-making initiatives have enabled these women to break through cultural barriers and to inspire a new generation of girls. Economically empowered women have better chances of negotiating and safeguarding their choices regarding the basic household and health needs of their families, especially during this time when women are bearing the economic brunt of the pandemic.

Pictured here are images of the women of Esidai at work sewing pads and underwear, tracking expenses, and making soap. We are proud to report that the women's soap-making project (bottom right) is virtually self-sufficient now.

### More 2022 Successes:

- **200 liters per month of soap** produced using locally available materials, which the women sell to local lodges, schools, hospitals, and community members

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*“We see a shift in our perception of ourselves, and what we can bring to the table changes. It’s not easy for Maasai women like us, none of us went to school, but we are able to challenge cultural perceptions especially when it comes to the empowerment of Maasai women. And that is a hope for a brighter future for all of us.”*

- Nanetia, Soap Group Treasurer

# Collaborating with Others

AKTF works closely with the Mara Conservancy, Angama Mara, Mara North Conservancy, Mara Elephant Project, David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, as well as Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forestry Service, and many more, such as Jim Nyamu and Elephant Neighbors Centre and Eden Wildlife Trust. We are extremely grateful for the support and partnership we enjoy with these organizations, and of course from all our private donors as well.

We must make special note that National Geographic has funded our boma project since the very beginning. We are so grateful and proud to have received their support, guidance, and partnership.



ANGAMA





Thank you!  
Asante sana!  
Ashe oLeng!

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- The Anne K. Taylor Fund

