



Resilience in the eyes of indigenous organization in Laikipia

Location:

Laikipia County
Kenya

Partner:

IMPACT

Authors:

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IMPACT Executive Director Mali Ole Kaunga at a past meeting addressing staff members.

Photo credit: IMPACT



Mr Ole Kaunga engaging Leparua community members in Isiolo County on land rights related issues..

Photo credit: IMPACT

Since the community was receptive to our objective of bringing about positive changes in the society, they welcomed our simple ways of operation, inviting us to their homes, offering food and place to sleep. Operators of public transport vehicles (matatus) could give us lifts when we had no money to pay for our fare something that encouraged us to push on despite the hardship." Ole Kaunga, Executive Director, IMPACT.

Passion to empower Northern Kenya's pastoralist communities on social justice and alternative livelihoods in the wake of a changing climate has catalysed the remarkable growth of the Indigenous Movement for Peace Advancement and Conflict Transformation (IMPACT).

As the abbreviations characteristically suggest, this organization has made a big impact on various communities living in Northern Kenya through the promotion of Integrated Risk Management (IRM) to strengthen and protect the livelihoods of vulnerable people.

But the journey to achieving this milestone has not been easy and was characterized by bumpy rides until Catholic Organization for Relief and Development (Cordaid) came on board, providing much-needed support through its Partners for Resilience (PfR) programme.

IMPACT Director Mali Ole Kaunga says partnering with Cordaid to implement PfR programmes (both PfR1 and PfR2) was the much-needed impetus that brought about the growth, from being an organization with no proper office facilities to its current status where it has established three fully operational offices in Laikipia and Samburu Counties.

For several years after its registration, IMPACT's interaction with the community was through home visits, at grazing fields and shopping centres, sensitizing the pastoralist community mainly on land-related rights in line with the 2010 Kenya Constitution.



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Mr Ole Kaunga (third from right) with some of his staff members and a visitor (on the left) during a consultative meeting at their offices in Nanyuki Town, Laikipia County.
Photo credit: IMPACT

Mr Ole Kaunga explains that IMPACT went into partnership with PfR in 2014 and this development saw the organization which was registered as a Trust in 2003 shed off its previous limply status.

Since then, tremendous growth has been witnessed in terms of human capacity, organizational systems, policies, partnerships, collaborations and increased budgetary allocation on its many programmes.

In 2016 through capacity building programme supported by Cordaid, IMPACT developed elaborate operational policies and systems such as Anti-Corruption Policy, Communication Policy, Ethical Code of Conduct, Computer Use Policy, Finance Policy, Human Resource and Procedures Manual as well as the Constitution.

The first grants of 120,000 Euros from PfR in January 2017 came with good tiding and following the empowerment acquired through Cordaid, more donors streamed in. In 2017 alone, IMPACT received a total of 220,000 Euros from various donors which include The Christensen Fund (TCF), RSF, Wetlands International and Cordaid.

The PfR partnership has seen IMPACT receive support in diverse areas that have accelerated its growth to its current status where it is now sub-granting other organizations in Northern Kenya.

The organization has mobilized resources to the tune of USD350,000 to sub-grant five grassroots movements attached to Pastoralist Alliance for Resilience and Adaptation in Northern Kenya (PARAN) where each has received USD30,000 in a two-year programme. This project is being implemented in Marsabit, Laikipia, Samburu and Isiolo counties.

The PfR programme has also contributed immensely to building the capacity of IMPACT staff on Integrated Risk Management (IRM), participatory planning and evaluation, leadership and governance, financial management, climate change and Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction among others.

Finance and Administration Manager at IMPACT Elizabeth Silakan says training session commenced after an Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) was done by Cordaid in 2016 where gaps were identified in the organization's management structure.

The training enabled IMPACT Trust to incorporate a working board which placed it in a position to manage grants.

“Besides the growth of IMPACT, I owe my career growth to the financial management training supported by Cordaid. At one time, I was taken for a short course on grant management which now enables me to manage a portfolio of nine with one being a sub-grant facility for grass root organization.”
Elizabeth Silakan,
Finance and
Administration
Manager at IMPACT.



"There is need to establish a unified cross pastoralist organization that looks at other pastoral communities natural resource rights which have been violated in Southern Ethiopia, Northern Uganda and Northern Tanzania." Ole Kaunga on IMPACT's future plans.

"Immediately after the assessment, we were taken through financial management skills and it's then we developed our first proposal, completing it in December 2016 where we signed a contract with PfR as a full-time partner and that marked the beginning of a series of training that targeted the community as well as our staff," Ms Silakan explains.

Through leveraging on PfR funding, IMPACT secured funding related to climate change and natural resource management, peace building among others. For instance, PfR has been supporting the annual Camel Caravan to sensitize communities and authorities on the importance of conserving the Ewaso Ng'iro River Ecosystem. For the last two years, WfD has joined other organizations to sponsor the annual camel caravan campaigns.

Through PfR, IMPACT's work became reputable among the stakeholders and Government bodies in the three target Counties.

Through their lobby work at County level, IMPACT partnered with County Governments of Laikipia and Samburu through the County Steering Groups and the Department of Special Programmes which is mandated to address disaster-related issues.

In 2019 IMPACT was able to negotiate with Laikipia County Government on joint training of MCAs on community Land Act while in 2020 the organization has negotiated with Laikipia, Marsabit and Samburu Counties to incorporate IRM or DRM budgetary allocations in the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP).

According to Ms Silakan, IMPACT has a well-defined path in the next five years thanks to the knowledge and skills gained during the partnership with PfR, the organization is now focused on resource mobilization for grassroots organizations which cannot access funding directly because of low capacities.

"With gained internal skills on resource mobilization, IMPACT will focus on building a pool of fund that communities can apply and access with minimal requirements and through supervision and mentorship of IMPACT to implement their IRM projects," says Mr Ole Kaunga.

As part of expansion plans, IMPACT has secured a parcel of land in the outskirts of Nanyuki town and build a spacious office. The office with its assets and a large compound will also be utilized as a learning centre for communities to facilitate capacity building.

The only challenge expected is one that comes with an expansion. From a staff of 4 to 16 currently and with three offices to run, there will be a need to hire and build the capacity of new employees including a human resource manager.

