



**SPRING OF THE ARID  
& SEMI ARID LANDS**  
*Towards Thriving Pastoral Communities*

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - SASAL**





## **WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR**

2023 has been a turning point for SASAL. Our efforts for the past 3 years (since 2019) paid off and for the first time, we received donor support to expand our projects and operations.

2023 has been a year full of learning, eye opening experiences & relationship building with the community. Of it all, we gained the trust, love and support of the community.

The same year, we established a partnership with the host county government through various departments. Making our work effortless & more impactful.

SASAL's work gained traction. In particular, our new model, "The Enkang' model for gender equality & climate resilience" that aims to build a gender-equal & climate resilient pastoral village in the midst of patriarchal societies. It was featured in different media platforms for its innovativeness & holistic approach to the challenges facing pastoral communities. The model was registered as the newest youth-led commitment to advancing gender equality under the Generation Equality Feminist Action for Climate Justice Action Coalition of the UN Women.

Our presence was felt in different national & international conferences such as the UN water conference, SB58, Africa Climate summit, COP28 among many others. Our work on advocacy; promoting the voices of the pastoralists in climate decision making expanded to 3 pastoral counties i.e. Kajiado, Samburu, Narok from which recommendations for COP28 were developed and presented in the same conference.

SASAL gained observer status with the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) after gaining the same with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) last year. We also got to represent NGO's at the newly formed Magadi Ward Climate Change Committee (under Kajiado County) We are grateful for all the growth we've made through the years to this point. I take this opportunity to thank Allah (the almighty), all SASAL volunteers, supporters, donors and partners. The organization's success is all attributed to your individual efforts. Cheers to a new year full opportunities, possibilities and more success.



*-Ms Mana Omar (SASAL)*



# WHO ARE WE?

SASAL is a non-governmental organization working with pastoral communities in Arid and semi-arid lands to build climate resilience. To achieve climate resilience, we have developed several programs on awareness/knowledge creation, mitigation, and adaptation. The idea for SASAL was born in the year 2015 but became a reality in September 2019. It was initially named "smile of a pastoralist" but then renamed.

Our story stems from an exciting point of view from our founder, who is also a meteorologist and from a pastoral community. She couldn't help but notice the continuous land degradation, recurrent droughts, and loss of livelihood in her home area in Magadi, Kajiado county. Studying meteorology led her to believe that the effects of droughts such as the loss of livelihoods could be evaded by proper preparedness by following weather forecasts issued by the Kenya Meteorological department. However, she realized some of the barriers hindering the farmers from consuming the weather forecasts and using them. That's when the idea was born of forming an organization that will be like a "spring" not only in Kajiado county but all of the Arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya and help people build climate resilience through creating awareness, adapting to climate change and some mitigation actions. Hence the name Spring of the ASAL's.

## OUR MISSION

To work with the Pastoral communities in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands(ASALs) of Kenya for their improved climate resilience.



## OUR VISION

Climate- resilient and thriving pastoral communities capable of anticipating, coping and recovering from the impacts of climate change.







# PROJECTS;

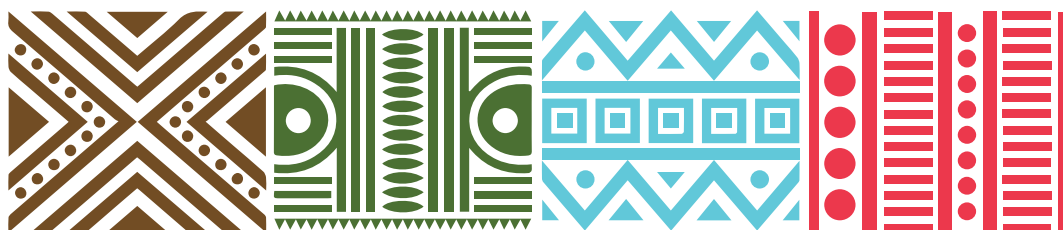
# 1

## LIVING IN THE ASAL'S CLIMATE STORIES



Short videos (reels) were shot, telling stories of gender-based violence and its impacts on the lives of women and girls. **5 stories (in form of reels) were shot and uploaded on our social media platforms, reaching a total of 1,829 accounts on Instagram.**

In addition, a 4-minute documentary was shot to summarize, in brief, the root causes of gender-based violence (GBV) in Musenke Village, Kajiado county. The film featured women & girls who've in a way experienced different forms of GBV sharing their lived experiences as well as the SASAL team sharing some of the findings of a research conducted in the same area. The aim was to enable viewers visualize such scenarios and understand how climate change fuels gender-based violations indirectly. It was also aimed at creating attention & raising awareness on the grave violation of women's rights in the name of culture and tradition. The video was uploaded on SASAL's website (homepage) & social media pages to gain more traction. It has also been played and shared with different organizations and journalists. **The video reached 1,071 accounts on Instagram and 165 on YouTube.**





2

# LAND RESTORATION

## GREENING THE ASAL'S

50\*100 land purchase for restoration, build a center to showcase our restoration efforts through agroforestry. Restoration activities were kickstarted in April; Through the agroforestry technique involving the growing of vegetables, fruits and indigenous trees. **A total of 650 trees were grown in both the land and nearby school (Olkiramatian Arid Zone Primary School). As at December 2023, we report a survival rate of 90% of all the trees grown in both locations with the 10% lost due to issues regarding soil composition and domestic animal disturbance.** We also continued tending to our other land restoration projects (farms) through a worker hired (from the community) specifically for this during the same period. 5 casual workers also benefitted from our restoration project through different services they provided such as land fencing, holes digging etc.

**By mid august, we made our first harvest of indigenous vegetables that benefitted 10 single-mother headed & widowed households enabling them provide a meal a day for 4 months consecutively.**





# 3

## INTERNATIONAL/NATIONAL EVENTS & CONVENINGS

SASAL as an accredited United Nations Environment Programme & United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change observer organization is keen in not only observing in key environment/climate change conferences but also participating and providing critical insights on topics related to climate change, gender, working with grassroots communities among others. It was also important for the organization as a young start-up one to promote our holistic solution on climate vulnerability and gender inequality particularly in an indigenous, patriarchal community setting. In the year 2023, SASAL was privileged to have been represented meaningfully in different international and national events.

A delegate/delegation was sent to the UN water Conference in New York, the meeting of the subsidiary bodies on the 58th session (SB58) in Germany, Women Deliver conference in Rwanda, a talk & workshop on the right to move & stay organized by the Vienna institute for development cooperation (VIDC) in Austria, the Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi, a convening of the African regional actors on climate justice in Ghana and the UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai. In all these events, our representatives participated as panelists, speakers and attended relevant side events to learn, network and contribute to the discussions. These travels presented an opportunity for us to market & sell products from our women empowerment program (*Saen Lenkang'*) under the recently established *Enkang'* model project. It has also enabled us get media coverage for our work & insights for example, the *Enkang'* model was featured in both the Nation Africa and the Star newspaper.





Participating in international climate conferences has also provided us with grounds to push our advocacy work forward as well as contributing to negotiations and influencing the processes. SASAL's advocacy work: "Pastoralists Awake, the Pastoralists Agenda" on elevating the voices of the Pastoralists communities from all over Africa in key climate change discussions would not be effective without access to these global events. At COP28, we managed to make a huge stride both in advocacy and the Enkang' project by submitting a document collating key demands & messages from pastoralists leaders of the Maa Economic Bloc in Kenya for COP28 and speaking about the Enkang' model in various side events. During the same COP, SASAL managed to host one of its first ever side events on the topic; Climate change real lived impacts, the pastoralist perspectives aimed at creating awareness and understanding on the disproportionate effect climate change has had on the Pastoralists.

SASAL also participated, upon invitation as one of the key organizations working with pastoralists in the Arid and Semi-arid Lands of Kenya to different in-country convenings/ meetings to contribute or provide insights on certain issues. Examples of such convenings is the Kenya stakeholder consultative workshop on the development of the IGAD climate adaptation strategy held at Weston Hotel by IGAD and Kajiado County CSO's training on County Climate Legislation hosted by ALIN Network in Kajiado among more others.





# 4

## ENKANG' MODEL FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE & GENDER EQUALITY

Introductory meetings with key stakeholders/community leaders and members. Including national government officials such as the assistant county commissioner & chiefs, county government officials such as the village administrators, ward administrator and member of county assembly. Age-group traditional leaders of the 8 age-groups namely: *Seuri, Irkiseiyia, Irang'irang', Irkishili, Irmajeshi, Mishuki, Renjai* and *Ilmirishi* and village elders heading different institutions such as schools, environment, hospital etc. The effort was meant to introduce the organization and its mission in this particular community as well as foster trust & show respect to the stakeholders so as to enable a safe and welcoming environment that would accommodate projects sustainably. We also introduced the project we intended to start on promoting gender equality and building climate resilience. The concept, objectives, mission & vision of the project. There was an overall buy-in of the project based on our approach as the theme was quite sensitive in this particular community setting. The leaders consequently gave us a go-ahead to kick-start the project.

Our project on "Building climate resilience and gender equality in Musenke, Kajiado county" officially kickstarted in February 2023 with a research on the root causes of gender-based violence and climate vulnerabilities within this particular community. Several data collection methods both quantitative and qualitative were deployed including: Questionnaires, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The questionnaires were administered to a sample size of 343 households determined with 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error and covered the entire Musenke Village. The research phase of the project, including data analysis took 3 months after which a final report was developed.

Collection of data during this period benefitted 7 community members for 2 weeks who provided translation, data collection and entry services.





Due to the nature of settlement of the community (scattered) and how they operated, it was extremely hard to visit the households selected randomly to partake in the survey.

We therefore ought to alleviate one of the main challenges of the community so as to get time to administer questionnaires effectively. We distributed water within the village at different points to facilitate this exercise as well as save women & girls the journey to fetch water from the river as well as men & boys the journey to get water for their animals. A total of 56,000 liters (8 water boozers of 7,000 litres water each) where 1,400 households benefitted with 40 litres of clean drinking water. With an average of 6 people per household, this benefitted a total of 8,400 people within the span of 7 days.

Understanding the data gap on the nexus between climate change and gender and the contribution we made through our research on the root causes of gender-based violence, we widely disseminated our final report on this with relevant organizations working on the same Nexus. We had the privilege of presenting the findings of our study to the society of gender professionals and climate justice circle after the data analysis and received great feedback with no criticism. Our research also got published on the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) website while our organization also joined as a member.



After the research phase, we conducted several feedback sessions with the stakeholders, leaders and community to present our findings and get their input. After the sessions, we agreed to establishing a diverse committee (from the community, with different representatives from various sectors) to engage with the SASAL in curating a solution for the challenges identified and in the implementation of the solution. Several engagements with the committee led us to a holistic solution which we collectively called "The Enkang' Model for climate resilience and gender equality" that will seek to benefit 63 households from Lorngo'sua village within the wider Musenke. The solution aims to create a model of a climate-resilient, gender-equal pastoral village that can be replicated in other pastoral communities and makes use of the observational learning technique. The village will encompass 12 programs cutting through the 17 SDG's to ensure every root cause of the challenge is addressed effectively. The programs include: Improvement of the traditional Manyatta's, providing access to clean and safe water, culture preservation, promoting access to clean energy for cooking and lighting, women empowerment program (Saen Lenkang') among others. More information on this model can be found on our website ([www.sasal.org](http://www.sasal.org)) .





After the establishment of the community committee, several of their own meetings and other meetings with the SASAL team as well as the selection and training of the beneficiaries on the concept, we had a meeting on the start of the implementation of the model based on the funds available and agreed on the women empowerment program (SAEN LENKANG') which commenced in September 2023.

Prior to starting the program, the SASAL team conducted benchmarking in several beads markets, did research on markets and started making sample products- engaging different professional beaders to try out unique product sample we thought could work for the program.

The program started with trainings and a launch to publicize it. By the end of the year 2023, 63 women were trained on beading i.e. color coding, patterns, finishing etc. while 22 women drawn from the same group (first batch) broadly divided into 4 groups made 22 items (bags, sandals, wallets and accessories) that was marketed & sold by SASAL yielded an income of USD 400 translating to USD 100 per group. All these was done in less than 3 months. The use of the income per group will be decided upon by the group members with more trainings on financial management by SASAL in the year 2024.

The Enkang' model was launched in a colorful ceremony in September 2023 by the deputy governor of Kajiado County His Excellency Hon Martin Moshisho alongside other dignitaries and community members.







Our Resource mobilization team did not tire to continue looking for funds/support for the implementation of the Enkang' model as well as our other projects. We therefore took time after the research phase and some trainings, to focus on resource mobilizing.

We engaged with various donors and applied for various grants. We also explored & established a partnership with the Kajiado County Government under the Department of Environment, Natural Resources & Climate Change. We also established a Partnership with SUDWIND At (Austria) on our advocacy project (The Pastoralists Climate Agenda). In addition, SASAL was honored to co-lead in the writing of an open letter (Pre-COP28) with our Executive Director as representative, alongside 6 other African Female leaders to the African heads of state on matters gender equity & inclusion. A lot of other applications were made, meetings held & networks established. All for the purpose of gaining more support in terms of funding.

These efforts culminated to our Enkang' model acquiring 50% of its budget in late 2023 to kickstart implementation of some of its crucial programs early this year (2024).







## ADVOACACY PROJECT

### ***“Pastoralists Awake, the Pastoralists Agenda”***

Spring of the Arid and Semi-arid Lands (SASAL) in association with the MAA economic Bloc in Kenya, acknowledged the importance of the loss and damage fund and its progress since the groundbreaking agreement at COP27. The Maa Economic Bloc in Kenya consisting of counties home to the indigenous Maasai community namely; Kajiado, Narok and Samburu counties was recently established (2023) to promote unity of the Maasai community across all counties in Kenya.

The bloc will promote a more unified approach towards matters of common interest including the promotion & preservation of culture as well as joint voice in seeking reparation & restitution for the historical injustices meted towards these communities. Through the advocacy project, SASAL conducted a series of consultations

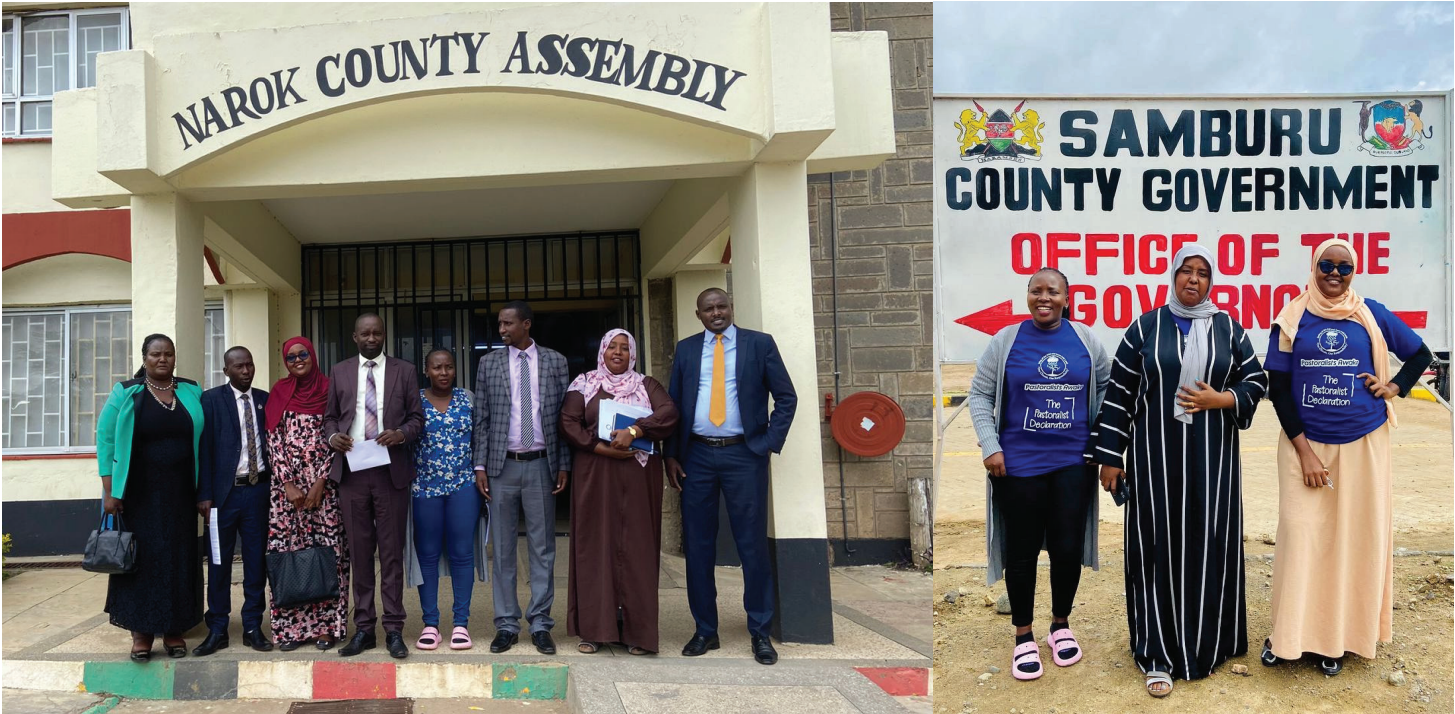
within these 3 counties with an aim of including the pastoralists voice from this bloc in the loss and damage discussions at COP28 in order to benefit such vulnerable and marginalized communities at the grassroots level. These involved rigorous consultations with key leaders & departments from the 3 counties constituting the bloc such as the members of county assemblies, deputy governors, county executive committee members representing the departments of climate change, livestock and gender, directors, chief officers, CSO representatives among others. From the consultations, key messages and recommendations were collated, from this bloc, to constitute a document





“The Pastoralist demands and messages for COP28” (<https://sasal.org/projects/3127-2/>). During the COP28, our representative closely followed up with the negotiations on loss and damage and also worked closely with the YOUNGO loss and damage working group, Sudwind and negotiators from Kenya to ensure the messages from these leaders were mainstreamed in interventions provided by different constituencies.

Due to this hard work, in one of the interventions provided by YOUNGO, the word ‘Pastoralists’ which often got hidden inside the wider ‘Indigenous people and local communities’ group stood alone to represent a community with a totally unique need. The document developed from our consultations was also shared in a European press conference consisting of more than 10 media organizations and was disseminated to 2 UNFCCC constituencies. The document has also been submitted to the loss and damage transitional committee as an input during their meetings.



### ACCREDITATION

In 2023, in addition to being a UNEP accredited observer organization, SASAL also gained observation status with the UNFCCC during COP28.







## PARTNERS & DONORS



**Blue Earth Organization**

**Greenhouse communications**



**County Government Of**  
**KAJIADO**