



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



COMPASSION IN CHALLENGING TIMES

## DEAR MEMBERS OF SAUTI MOJA COMMUNITY

Eighteen years ago, the Founders of Sauti Moja set out our vision for the well-being of marginalized pastoralists with a focus on vulnerable women and children. This was to be achieved through grass-roots development programs (education, livelihoods and health) initiated by local leaders - not food aid.

Though I had previously reviewed historic weather data, which showed increased frequency of drought, we did not foresee the rate and impact of global warming, more humanitarian disasters worldwide, and related inability of large international agencies to address growing hunger in the Horn of Africa. This new reality demanded a shift – hopefully temporary – to our major expenditure, this year, being food aid.

The past year has also been difficult for our partners, as direct and indirect effects of global warming has affected their families, too. Our Management Team praises these staff, who are the front-line of operations and continue to diligently serve their communities, though they, too, have lost livestock due to drought, had failed crops, were unable to meet constant demand for help from neighbours and extended family, and sometimes at personal risk due to COVID and violence.

In spite of the current emphasis on food aid, our partners have been creative in addressing some new challenges that, unlike purchase of livestock, are not capital intensive. For example, our Kenyan partner, RETO, has conducted pre-election civic education meetings as well as established land use planning in the lowlands. Sauti Moja Tanzania has increased sexual and reproductive health training for local youth by conduct-



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ing sessions during school break. Both agencies established new peer-support groups for people living with HIV/AIDS.

**Tim Wright**  
Co-founder and Director, Sauti Moja



**Cover photo:** When the goats come home in the evening, their kids compete with hungry little children for milk.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Donations in this financial year (FY21-22) totaled \$242,486. However, Sauti Moja expenditures exceeded revenue for a net loss of \$17,858. The main reason for this loss was our food assistance response; this was budgeted as \$71,026, but due to continued drought and increased hunger, we spent \$90,294. A summary of program expenditures for the year follows.

### EXPENSES FOR FY21-22

Food Assistance (people with AIDS, orphans, elderly, peace widows, IDPs, etc.)	35%	\$90,294
Education (peace clubs, adult literacy, preschools, civic education, etc.)	24%	\$61,386
Vulnerable Youth (child mothers, deaf children, orphans, advocacy, etc.)	18%	\$46,236
Sustainable Livelihoods (livestock, small business support, and land rights)	11%	\$28,522
Community and Family Health (HIV/AIDS, family health, SRH, etc.)	10%	\$28,404
Administration and Fundraising in Canada	2%	\$5,502
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$260,344</b>

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# EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

Successive failed rains in the Horn of Africa have resulted in crop failures and livestock deaths leading to millions hungry. This impact of drought on food supply has been compounded by skyrocketing price of staples – partly related to the war in Ukraine – which limits food access for the poor. In addition, the many disasters in the world have overstretched the capacity of international agencies, such as World Food Program and Red Cross, to address the hunger of most people in our beneficiary communities.

Therefore, food assistance by Sauti Moja has been and continues to be critical to the survival of some of our beneficiaries. We provide bi-weekly food assistance to our most-vulnerable households (HHs). The nourishment enables moms to continue with normal household duties that take so much energy, such as fetching firewood, carrying water long distances, digging roots to feed goats, and child care.

During this year, Sauti Moja increased food assistance, as the two ‘rainy seasons’ failed and hunger increased.

## JULY 2021:

We continued assisting 125 food-insecure HHs in Kenya - mostly those displaced by conflict and households of orphans and those with special needs.

## OCTOBER 2021:

As the ‘short rains’ were inadequate, we added 100 HHs plus provided food to a boarding school so that 250 secondary girls could finish the term.

## APRIL 2022:

By then, hunger had become severe in Tanzania, and the ‘long rains’ were failing, so we scaled-up to provide food to 372 HHs in Kenya and Tanzania.

Recovery from widespread hunger cannot be expected until after the next rainy season - October to December. So, Sauti Moja committed to supporting 576 households (more than 2500 people) with food assistance for July to December 2022. We wish that we could help more hungry people, as our partners frequently plead for more funding for vulnerable neighbours, but we took a big leap by budgeting \$114,000 (\$33/mo/HH) to help these households.



❶ *Imole, whose family was displaced by conflict in Marsabit said, “I could not just sit back and receive and keep quiet... I came today to give appreciation for the food aid support that has helped us more than we ever thought. You said it’s a little support, but we see it as a huge relief done for us by God through your office. On behalf of our family, I appreciate the donors who remembered us. Thank you!”*

❷ *Jumbe is an elderly widow who had contracted HIV from her husband, is now weakened by AIDs, suffers from isolation due to community stigma, and struggles to get enough to eat. Recently, she tearfully thanked our partners saying, “Sauti Moja Tanzania is my hope to be alive. Your support is so much helpful to my life,”*

❸ *Qabale told our RETO partner that “I came back from looking after goats, and that night, my children and I planned to sleep hungry. It was dusk, when I learned food distribution had started, so I rushed to the shop and received food. I immediately cooked githeri [mixture of maize and beans]. My children and I had our dinner at midnight, and went to sleep with our stomachs satisfied. Thank you for reaching us at the right time!”*

# RESPONSES TO NEW CHALLENGES

## BATTLING COVID

Recognizing the risk to their communities, Sauti Moja Tanzania contacted the Ministry of Health (MOH) to identify how they could help with COVID prevention. We provided transport to 21 villages, where doctors emphasized the risk and need to take precautions. One of our staff, Esupat, also told villagers of her suffering with COVID. Later, we helped transport staff for vaccinations. In April, MOH nurses joined to vaccinate community leaders and others attending HIV/AIDS training.

## MEETING SPECIAL NEEDS

Desperate parents sometimes hear of our Kenyan partners' compassionate responses to special needs of children – the needs that overwhelm and are beyond their capacity to address. Dida is a single parent who does only small, casual labour jobs, as he is sole caregiver of Roba, a 9-year-old son with cerebral palsy. Previously, Dida had to carry Roba, but after receiving a wheelchair, Dida said, "For nine years, I was both father and mother, but you joined Roba and me. I owe you thanks for this [wheelchair], food assistance, and diapers. May God help you!"

1 Oshumu and Esupat (left) continue to support district medical staff in COVID prevention messaging and vaccinations in remote villages.

2 Diba is grateful for Roba's wheelchair, which relieves him of a great burden in a society that has little support for children with special needs.

3 Lillian (left) completed her training and will begin hairdressing, providing an example of a promising future for others who believe they have no hope due to AIDS.

4 Psychological counseling helps displaced families, who lost everything due to ethnic conflict, overcome trauma and begin healing, as they struggle to rebuild their lives.

5 Civic education helped villagers understand elections and the importance of evaluating candidates according to their record of service and commitment to peace.

## OVERCOMING AIDS STIGMA

Due to mother-to-child transmission, Lillian (left) was born with HIV and suffered the stigma of isolation by her community on lower slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro. She is a vibrant young woman who is determined to not let the disease or stigma stand in her way. As her mother is weak and poor, we sponsor her studying hairdressing. She is enthusiastic about her future, wanting to inspire those who hide their AIDS and neglect their health due to the misconception that they won't live long and have no future.

## ADDRESSING TRAUMA

Most of the people displaced from their villages due to ethnic conflict are traumatized by loss of livestock, homes, fields, and most of their possessions. RETO staff arranged for small groups – 120 persons in total – to be counseled by a psychologist. The highly-emotional sharing of trauma with their peers contributed to healing, and the psychologist advised that to release more pain, they would eventually need to forgive. Galgallo, a father of ten, said, "[My problems] cannot be carried in one vehicle... from the time we were displaced, we never had such session. My heart is overjoyed, and I feel change. I can now move forward with hope." (Of course, the next step must be reconciliation, which includes the very difficult process of restitution for losses.)

## PREVENTING ELECTION VIOLENCE

In order to promote a peaceful, democratic national elections in August 2022, RETO staff conducted 59 civic education training sessions in rural Marsabit villages. These included village discussions on which candidates have demonstrated commitment to peace, unity, and social justice. Some politicians and religious leaders also encouraged non-violence, but based upon the enthusiastic feedback of village participants, this unprecedented grassroots activity contributed significantly to the acceptance of results and peaceful outcome, locally.

