



USAID Nawiri
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USAID Nawiri Annual Report

Year 4

October 2022 - September 2023

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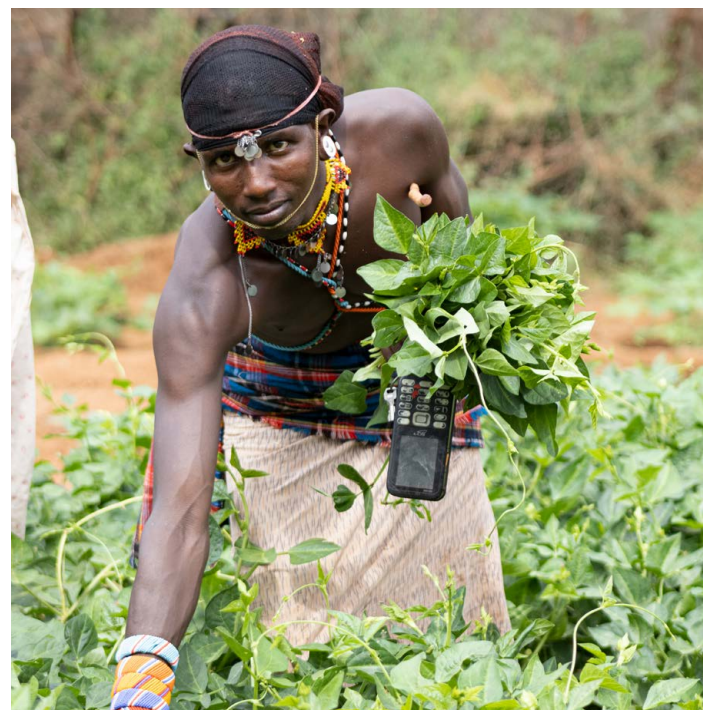
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Acronym List

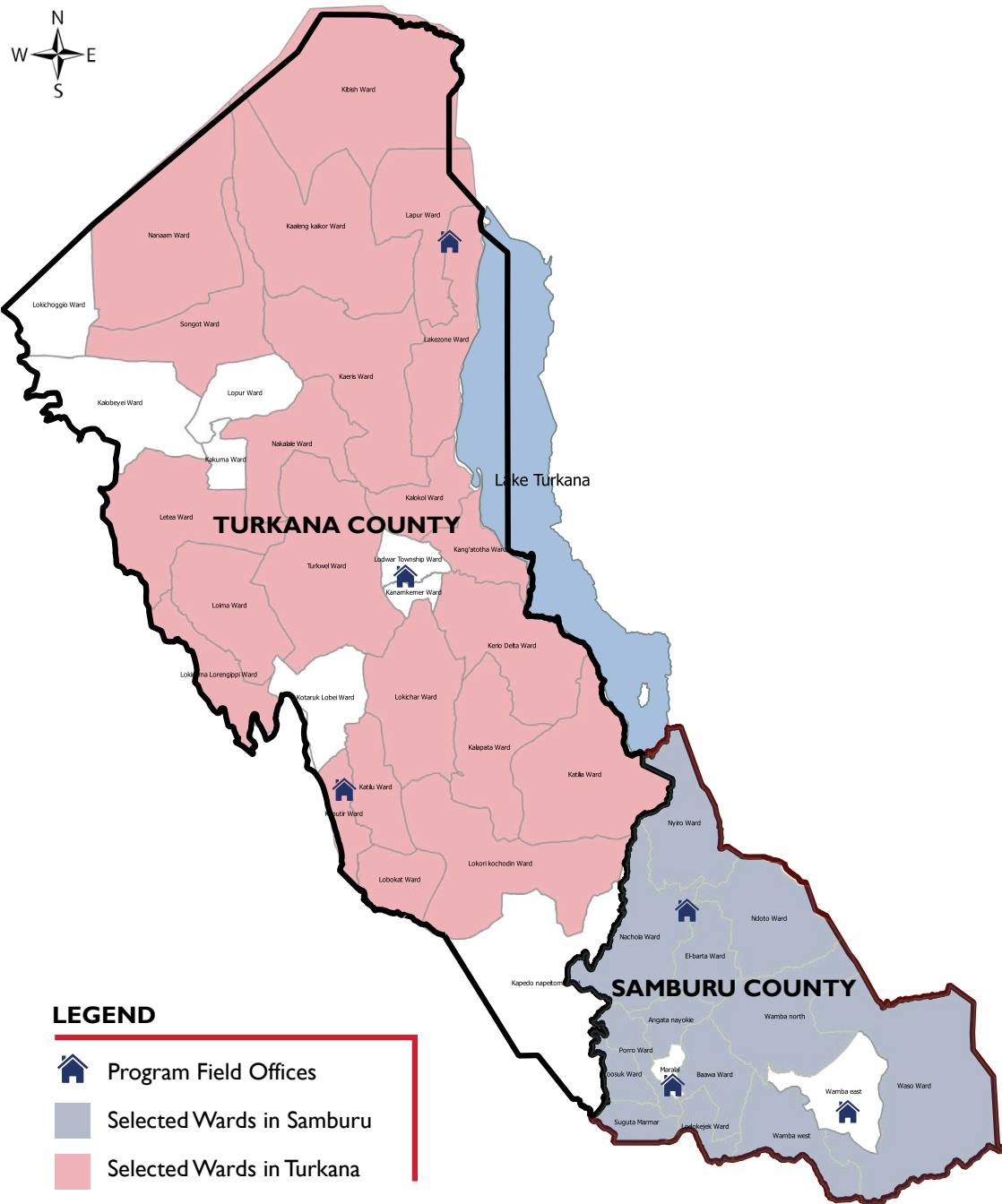
ABCD	Annual Beneficiaries Collection of Data	CLTS	Community-Led Total Sanitation	GIRL-H	Girls Improving Resilience through Livelihood plus Health	KHIS	Kenya Health Information System
AGCD	Agriculture Collection of Data	CMAM	Community Management of Acute Malnutrition	GIS	Geospatial Information Systems	LIP	Local Implementing Partner
AMTMSG	Adapted Mother-to-Mother Support Group	CMNR	Case Management for Nutrition Resilience	GISD	Global Invasive Species Database	LMA	Livestock Market Assessment
ANC	Antenatal Care	CRS	Catholic Relief Services	HA	Hectares	LMS	Livestock Market Systems
ASALs	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands	CRT	County Resource Team	HCD	Human Centered Design	LS	Longitudinal Study
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health	CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture	HCW	Healthcare Worker	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
BHA	Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance	CSG	County Steering Group	HEA	Household Economy Analysis	MAD	Minimum Acceptable Diet
BMU	Beach Management Unit	CSO	Civil Society Organization	HFIAS	Household Food Insecurity Access Scale	MAM	Moderate Acute malnutrition
CARM	Community Accountability Reporting Mechanism	CU	Community Unit	HH	Household	MCH	Maternal and Child Health
CBC	Community Business Committees	CIMES	County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System	HINI	High Impact Nutrition Intervention	MDD	Minimum Diet Diversity
CBO	Community Based Organization	DER	Drought Emergency Response	ICCM	Integrated Community Case Management	MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
CDRs	Community Disease Reporters	DIP	Detailed Implementation Plan	IFAS	Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation	MIS	Management Information Systems
CHA	Community Health Associations	DQA	Data Quality Assessment	IGA	Income Generating Activity	MIYCN	Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition
CHC	Community Health Committee	DRSLP	Drought Resilience and Sustainable Livelihoods Program	IMAM	Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition	MOH	Ministry of Health
CHEW	Community Health Extension Worker	E-CHIS	Electronic Community Health Information System	IMNCI	Integrated Management of Newborn and Childhood Illnesses	MTE	Midterm Evaluation
CHP	Community Health Promoters	E-CIMES	Electronic County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System	IOs	Intermediate Outcomes	MUAC	Mid Upper Arm Circumference
CHS	Community Health Systems	EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan	IPC	Integrated Phase Classification	MUS	Multiple-Use System
CHVs	Community Health Volunteers	FCDO	Frontiers Children Development Organization	IPM	Integrated Pest Management	NDMA	National Drought Management Authority
CIAAP	Community Integrated Assessment and Action Planning	FIAS	Food Insecurity Access Scale	IPTT	Indicator Performance Tracking Table	NRM	Natural Resource Management
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan	FP	Family Planning	JMMI	Joint Market Monitoring Initiative	ODF	Open Defecation Free
CLA	Collaboration, Learning and Adapting	GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition	KALRO	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization	OJT	On-the-job
		GBV	Gender Based Violence			OTP	Outpatient Therapeutic feeding Program
						PACIDA	Pastoralist Community Initiative and Development Assistance
						PAM	Persistent Acute Malnutrition

Acronym List

PBS	Participant Based Survey	SOW	Scope of Work
P-GAM	Persistent Global Acute Malnutrition	SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
PLW	Pregnant and Lactating Women	SSBC	Social Structural Behavior Change
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal	SUAP	Safer Use Action Plan
PREG	Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth	SWG	Sector Working Group
PREP	Program Resource Estimated Proposal	TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
PRM	Participatory Rangeland Management	TOC	Theory of Change
R4N	REAP for Nutrition	TOT	Training of Trainers
REAP	Rural Entrepreneur Access Project	UCT	Unconditional Cash Transfer
RMS	Routine Monitoring System	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
RSFA	Resilience Food Security Activity	USG	United States Government
RTI	Research Triangle Institute	VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition	VTC	Vocational Training College
SBC	Social Behavioral Change	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication	WDF	Ward Development Fund
SCMP	Sub-Catchment Management Plans	WDP	Ward Development Plan
SFP	Supplementary Feeding Program	WDPC	Ward Development Planning Committee
SGBV	Sexual Gender Based Violence	WHO	World Health Organization
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise	WHZ	Weight-for-height z-score
SOG	Special Operations Group	WRMA	Water Resource Management Authority
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure	WRUA	Water Resource User Association
		WUA	Water Users Association
		Y4	Year 4
		Y5	Year 5



USAID Nawiri Implementation Wards



DISCLAIMER: This map is intended for reference purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained herein, we cannot guarantee its completeness or reliability.

Introduction

The Nawiri program, named after the Swahili word for “thrive,” is a flagship initiative funded by the USAID Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and led by Mercy Corps in partnership with Save the Children, Research Triangle Institute (RTI), the BOMA Project, African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), Caritas Lodwar, Frontier Children Development Organization (FCDO), Pastoralist Community Initiative and Development Assistance (PACIDA), and the Samburu Children Program. This eight-year program has a mission of sustainably reducing persistent acute malnutrition (PAM), defined as an ongoing and prolonged state of severe undernutrition where individuals consistently experience a significant lack of essential nutrients over an extended period, in Kenya’s arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs).

Nawiri uses a nutrition resilience framework, which is a structured approach to enhance the ability of individuals, communities, or systems to withstand, adapt to, and recover from challenges or shocks related to nutrition. Nawiri focuses on establishing essential pillars within households and communities, empowering them to withstand shocks, adapt to new challenges, and turn vulnerabilities into thriving opportunities. The program actively engages with county governments, citizens, and the private sector to enhance nutritional resilience in these regions.

Operating in two counties, Turkana and Samburu, the program spans a total of 35 wards, with 22 in Turkana and 13 in Samburu. This annual report covers the activities conducted in Year 4 (Y4) of the program, over the period of October 2022 to September 2023.

22
Number of wards in **Turkana** where the program operates.

13
Number of wards in **samburu** where the program operates.



Nawiri uses a nutrition resilience framework, which is a structured approach to enhance the ability of individuals, communities, or systems to withstand, adapt to, and recover from challenges or shocks related to nutrition.



Executive Summary

In its fourth year, Nawiri focused on expanding interventions and successfully engaged 313,401 unique participants, reached 95% of the overall Y4 target. Nawiri's commitment to empowering individuals in Samburu and Turkana, with a specific emphasis on women and girls, guided its initiatives. The adoption of the Community Integrated Assessments and Action Planning (CIAAP) process emerged as a pivotal strategy for site selection and resource optimization, supporting community-driven development through collaborative decision-making.

The comprehensive implementation of the CIAAP process covered all 352 targeted villages, influencing the sequencing and integration of Nawiri's interventions. Through the joint participant targeting and enrollment aspect of CIAAP, the 'anchor group' was refined. The anchor group consisting of community-based peer-to-peer support groups, include Adapted-Mother-to-Mother Support Groups (AMTMSGs) for women aged 25-49, prioritizing those with children below 5 years, Girls Improving Resilience through Livelihood and Health (GIRL-H) groups targeting adolescent girls and young women aged 10-24, while Boy groups targeting adolescent and young men aged 10-29, and the Rural Entrepreneur Access Project (REAP) for Nutrition (R4N) savings groups, a poverty graduation program, supporting ultra-poor households to build sustainable livelihoods and graduate out of poverty and undernutrition.

The adoption of the Community Integrated Assessments and Action Planning (CIAAP) process emerged as a pivotal strategy for site selection and resource optimization, supporting community-driven development through collaborative decision-making.

In Y4, the anchor group strategy specifically targeted participants based on their capacities and vulnerabilities, such as prioritizing out-of-school adolescent girls in GIRL-H groups, including women aged 25-49 in AMTMSGs, directing boys and men aged 15-29 to Boy groups, and incorporating ultra-poor women into either GIRL-H or AMTMSGs if they did not qualify for R4N groups. The major criteria for inclusion was also having a malnourished child and or mother and risk expectant mothers.

Nawiri's approach yielded promising outcomes, exceeding Y4 targets. The program effectively targeted children under five years as well as pregnant and lactating women (PLW) with nutrition-specific interventions across both counties, benefiting from integrated health and nutrition outreach services aimed at reaching communities in the last mile villages with health and nutrition services. Nawiri impacted 72,326 children under five years and 19,093 PLW with



313,401

Number of unique participants successfully engaged by Nawiri's expanding interventions, surpassing 95% of the overall Y4 target.

nutrition-specific interventions. Additionally, 41,261 children under five years and 13,272 PLW benefited from integrated health and nutrition outreach services.

Today, significant results have been realized, with 64.5% of farmers embracing interventions in crop, fodder, and livestock value chains, exceeding the Y4 target of 20%. The cumulative growth in income for saving and lending groups has reached \$3,290,131. Notably, 21,045 participants, consisting of 19,626 females and 1,419 males, accessed loans totaling \$139,583.

Moreover, there has been a notable improvement in the management of 63,095 hectares (HA) of land, incorporating practices and technologies that enhance climate risk reduction and promote effective natural resources management, including advancements in rangeland management practices. These accomplishments represent only a fraction of Nawiri's achievements. Throughout Y4, the Nawiri team has gained valuable insights and is eager to leverage this knowledge to expand the scope and impact of its interventions in Year 5 (Y5) across all 35 targeted wards.



63,095 Ha

Land under improved management incorporating practices and technologies that promote natural resource management



Nawiri impacted 72,326 children under five years and 19,093 PLW with nutrition-specific interventions.



\$139,583

Total amount accessed in loan by 21,045 participants, consisting of 19,626 females and 1,419 males

There has been a notable increase in willingness to adapt new farming practices among traditional pastoralist communities, such as Longlemwar as depicted in the photo.

Year 4 in Numbers:

Purpose 1: Ensuring vulnerable households can constantly access food



64.5%

Of farmers embraced crop, fodder. Livestock-related value chain interventions



\$ 3,290,131

Income growth for savings and loaning groups



63,095 ha

Of land for climate risk reduction and natural resource management



6,300

Producer group members



12,000

Households receiving R4N monthly consumption stipend



1.9M

Amount disbursed through Drought Emergency Response reaching 5307 HH

Purpose 3: Creating a stable environment that supports nutrition



84

Local leaders trained on addressing sexual Gender-based Violence



7,892

Anchor groups trained and mentored on addressing health and nutrition challenges



352

Villages engaged through CIAAP



102

Hybrid committees formed

Purpose 2: Minimizing Disease Risk



19,093

Pregnant and lactating women reached



26

Open-defecation free certified villages



72,326

Children under 5 reached



11

Multi-use water systems developed and rehabilitated



142

Health facilities supported by Nawiri



676

Healthcare workers receiving nutrition-related training

Purpose 4: Improving formal institutions ability to prevent and respond to malnutrition



72

Civil Society Organizations capacity built on nutrition



23

Wards having Ward Development Plans



23

County Directors trained on E-CIMES

Key Achievements

Restored hope: Nabiki's journey towards a food secure future

Nabiki Lobuk is a resilient woman from Masikita village in Samburu North who faced adversity in her childhood. Drought and tribal conflicts resulted into a tragic attack on her household. The aftermath left her with a gunshot wound and significant loss of livestock. However, in February 2022, Nabiki's life took a positive turn when she joined the Drought Emergency Response Fund (DER) by USAID Nawiri, receiving monthly support of KES. 7,000 for purchasing healthy foods for her household. She also joined the Namunyak Adopted Mother to Mother Support Group (AM2MSG) that focuses on child health and nutrition. With newfound knowledge, Nabiki established a home garden for nutritious vegetables with the support of USAID Nawiri. The program provides women with resources like seeds and tools for climate-smart farming. Nabiki and other women from the village formed a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) which fosters economic empowerment by encouraging saving and borrowing within the community. Despite challenges, Nabiki and the people of Masikita village demonstrate resilience that inspires hope for a brighter future.



KES 7,000

Amount Nabiki received monthly for purchasing healthy foods for her household after joining the Drought Emergency Response Fund (DER) by USAID Nawiri, in February 2022.



Women from the village formed a VSLA to foster economic empowerment by encouraging saving and borrowing within the community.



With newfound knowledge, Nabiki established a home garden for nutritious vegetables with the support of USAID Nawiri



Vulnerable Households Maintain Food Security Despite Exposure to Shocks and Stresses

Consistent access to affordable, diverse and safe foods in remote communities for optimal nutrition



27.1%

Increase in the adoption of improved crop and livestock technology



58,376

Hectares cultivated for cereal and pulses



70,107

Hectares cultivating indigenous leafy vegetables



4,244

Hectares Under fodder/pasture production

Nawiri's resilient livelihood strategy focused on promoting climate-adaptive and conflict-sensitive production, consumption, and sale of nutritious foods, including crops, poultry, fish, livestock, and honey. In Y4, the program successfully expanded agricultural systems, resulting in a 27.1% increase in the adoption of improved livestock and crop technology among 25,141 farmers.

The program prioritized enhancing agricultural practices, particularly in the management of crops like cereals and pulses, indigenous leafy vegetables, and pasture/fodder. Collaborating with County Departments, Nawiri identified 24 potential irrigation sites, provided specialized training in climate-smart agriculture techniques, and contributed to the adoption of climate-smart approaches.

The Annual Survey reported achievements for 34,786 participants, representing 53% of the Y4 target for Purpose 1. Progress was evident in dietary diversity and the adoption of improved agricultural practices, leading to positive nutritional outcomes. The Minimum Dietary and Diversity (MDD) among women in our program increased from 5% to 28.1% while the proportion of children aged 16 - 23 months receiving the Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) improved from 2% to 13.1%.

Collaborating with County Departments, Nawiri identified 24 potential irrigation sites, provided specialized training in climate-smart agriculture techniques, and contributed to the adoption of climate-smart approaches.



Farmers in USAID Nawiri supported Morulem irrigation scheme, Turkana, harvesting maize and sorghum for household consumption while the surplus serves the nearby markets

R4N demonstrated positive impacts on food security, with a reduction in severely food insecure households in Turkana from 98% to 60% and in Samburu from 93.7% to 54.8%.

Despite objective improvements in food security measures, perceptions of food insecurity increased to 95.1% in Y4, attributed to prevalent shocks and economic factors. Nawiri is confident that ongoing interventions would positively impact these perceptions over the next 12 months.

Strategic partnerships with Turkana and Samburu County governments, along with collaborations with organizations like Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO), played a pivotal role in the program's success. These partnerships enabled tailored interventions and capacity-building initiatives, particularly in poultry and fish value-chains. The program's future plans include organizing experiential learning events on fish value-addition, promoting local fish vendors, and stimulating fish consumption in non-traditional areas.

Despite improvements in food security measures, perceptions of food insecurity increased to 95.1% in Y4, attributed to prevalent shocks and economic factors.

source - Longitudinal Study

Vulnerable households can effectively manage their finances to buy healthy and sustainable diets for their diverse family members

3,300



R4N households underwent 18-month coaching, mentorship and monitoring for CMNR approach

86.89%



Of anchor groups receiving Financial Education

9



Community business councils established

In Y4, Nawiri made progress in extending the coverage of social assistance programs supported by the US Government. The Drought Emergency Response (DER) program, designed to assist vulnerable households facing severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and moderate acute malnutrition (MAM), provided support to 27,768 (5,307 HH) individuals in Samburu and Turkana.

Additionally, 8,700 households benefited from R4N consumption stipends aimed at empowering participant households to fulfill essential food and other requirements without resorting to strategies that jeopardize the nutritional well-being of vulnerable groups. The stipend also served to assist participant households in meeting basic needs without tapping into business capital, preserving the integrity of business establishment and growth. Notably, a new group (cohort 2) consisting of 3,300 R4N households were enrolled into the comprehensive 18-month program involving coaching, mentorship, and monitoring through the case management for nutrition resilience (CMNR) approach.

The integration of the consumption stipend with nutrition knowledge facilitated a faster learning curve, allowing participants to promptly apply insights gained from nutrition education during regular mentor visits for immediate nutritional benefits. This holistic approach led to behavioral changes in the types of food consumed.

12,000 households benefited from Stipends of Kes.6000 per month for 6 months aimed at empowering participant households to fulfill essential food and other requirements without resorting to strategies that jeopardize the nutritional well-being of vulnerable groups.



Mellisa Lesirayan, a member of Nkiretu Nkai GIRL-H Group, showcases their group savings in Ndonyo Nasipa, Samburu East

The program reached 80,123 participants under this sub-purpose area against a target of 120,000 participants, in Y4. This represents a significant increase from the previous year.

Financial education was provided to 86.89% of anchor group participants, including GIRL-H, Boy, AMTMSGs, and R4N participants. Nawiri also prioritized economic empowerment, particularly focusing on enhancing the financial well-being of adolescent girls and boys. Monitoring reports revealed notable increases in savings and loans among anchor groups, with cumulative income growth reaching KES 460,618,406 (\$3,290,131). Additionally, Nawiri successfully addressed economic challenges faced by local traders through the establishment of community business councils (CBCs), leading to the creation of a livestock market in Lokori Ward, Turkana.

Looking ahead to Y5, Nawiri plans to enhance Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) by implementing an integrated community savings and loan training manual. The manual will be tailored meet participants' financial management needs and support sustainable poverty alleviation.

Nawiri successfully addressed economic challenges faced by local traders through the establishment of community business councils (CBCs), leading to the creation of a livestock market in Lokori Ward, Turkana.

Consistent Access to Affordable, Diverse and Safe Foods in Remote Communities for Optimal Nutrition

4

Multi-use Water Systems completed in Samburu and Turkana



14.3%

Of households accessing basic sanitation services



600

Households constructing latrines and improving sanitation



12

Water User Association members established and trained



Nawiri made progress in addressing water and sanitation challenges through the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach. CLTS focuses on igniting a change in sanitation behavior through community participation to eliminate open defecation and improve overall sanitation practices. The approach emphasizes community participation, behavioral change, and empowerment rather than the conventional top-down approach of providing hardware solutions (such as toilets) alone.

The percentage of households with access to basic sanitation services increased to 14.3%, just below the Y4 target of 15%. There was also an increase in households using proper water treatment technologies. To strengthen its impact, Nawiri creatively incorporated traditional beliefs into CLTS initiatives and broke down gender-based barriers to achieve Open Defecation Free (ODF) status in 26 certified villages. The program’s innovative approach involved sanitation committees and active engagement of children in CLTS promotion, resulting in increased latrine construction and improved sanitation for 600 households in both counties.

Nawiri additionally supported the development and rehabilitation of multiple-use water systems in Samburu and Turkana. Four projects were completed, with seven more scheduled for completion in the second quarter of Y5. Additionally, 30 water projects have

been approved by BHA for Y5. In Samburu, Nawiri collaborated with the County Department of Water to complete the rehabilitation of Lolkuniyani and Lkwasi water supply projects, extending water access to vital institutions like the local schools and dispensaries. In Turkana, similar projects were completed in Kaaleng and Longolemwar villages.



Nawiri underscored the sustainability of water projects by establishing 12 Water User Associations (WUAs) and trained them on basic water governance and operation and maintenance. Further, Nawiri implemented pre-paid meters in all the water projects for automated revenue collection. The program also collaborated with Maji Milele in Samburu for token-based purchases and worked with the Water Resource Management Authority (WRMA) to set pro-poor tariffs. Inline chlorination systems were installed in all water projects to ensure safe drinking water.

Despite all these achievements, access to safe drinking water remained a challenge in our implementation areas. Only 14% of the Y4 target population had access to 20 liters of safe drinking water within a 30-minute walk. This led to a decline in households with access to soap and water at handwashing stations. The challenges in access to safe drinking water were attributed to delayed approvals of community water supply systems. High incidences of diarrhea was reported amongst under 5 years. To address this, Nawiri plans to focus on improving access to safe drinking water and addressing hygiene-related issues. The program also considers training anchor groups on the production of low-cost soap to promote household-level handwashing.



I recall trekking for nearly six hours to reach a shallow well approximately 10 kilometers from my house to fetch water for our household needs. In case that one ran dry, we had to turn to another called Lousikiriachi, but its water was contaminated. Thanks to USAID Nawiri, we now have access to clean water right next to our homes and we are immensely grateful. We have a reliable water supply for both domestic use and our livestock.”

*Onita Learkaa,
Community Member,
Lolkuniyani, Samburu East.*

Targeted groups utilize reliable and quality health and nutrition services even in challenging situations

29%



Overall decline in malnutrition in Kaaleng/Kaikor ward, down from 39%.

60%



Of traditional vegetables incorporated in meals were locally cultivated.

142



Number of health facilities supported through collaboration with county governments, 45% of them providing Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition.

In Y4, Nawiri witnessed a decline in Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates in Samburu and Turkana, as reported by the June 2023 SMART survey. Compared to the previous year (June 2022), Samburu reported a 1.5% decrease while Turkana reported an 8.4% reduction in GAM levels across sub-counties. In Nawiri's targeted Kaaleng/Kaikor ward in Turkana North, a hotspot for malnutrition, the reduction contributed to an overall decline in malnutrition from 39% in 2022 to 29% in 2023.

Targeted households are currently incorporating a varied selection of 5-7 food groups which is a positive shift credited to the adoption of new diets that include the incorporation of indigenous vegetables into their meals. Significantly, about 60% of these vegetables are locally cultivated by the participants. In Loonjorin and Nachola villages specifically, cases of malnutrition among anchor group participants decreased by an average of 77% within a three-month period from October to December 2022.

Collaborating with county governments, the program strengthened healthcare service delivery. It supported 142 health facilities in Samburu and Turkana with 45% of these facilities providing Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) services. The program achieved positive outcomes, with default rates of less than 15%, cure rates of less than 75%, and death rates less than 5%, aligning with the Global Sphere standards. Through this, Nawiri reached over 72,000 under-5 children and 19,000 pregnant women, contributing to a significant reduction in GAM levels.

The program achieved positive outcomes, with default rates of less than 15%, cure rates of less than 75%, and death rates less than 5%, aligning with the Global Sphere standards.



"Nawiri has equipped me with information and skills that have helped me transform the lives of my community. I can advise households on the correct nutritious diet as well as support in referral of malnutrition cases to the health facility. Nawiri has also taught us how to grow vegetables, something we never did before,"
Eunice Arogo, a CHV at Nachola Ward, Samburu North

Despite improvements in GAM, the challenges of impaired growth and development that children experience due to poor nutrition, repeated infection, and inadequate psychosocial stimulation increased in Turkana. This was potentially due to prolonged drought affecting food consumption. Nawiri addressed this by strengthening Community Health Workers' (CHWs) capacity to manage minor illnesses. Further, promoting the adoption of diverse, nutritious diets was done.

Nawiri further intensified access to quality health and nutrition services through anchor groups, reaching communities in remote areas. Anchor groups, including AMTMSGs, GIRL-H, Boy, and R4N groups, facilitated community growth monitoring, screening for acute malnutrition, family planning services, and strengthened referrals. The program also supported integrated health and nutrition outreaches, enabling easy access to services. The layered approach enhanced interactions between communities and healthcare workers.



Josephine Ewoi, a Community Health Assistant (CHA) at Nachola Dispensary attends to a referred under 5 child in Nachola, Samburu North Sub-county

Improvements in Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) practices were accomplished through a comprehensive approach, leveraging on community strengths. The initiative involved identifying MIYCN practices, understanding adoption barriers, and disseminating tailored messages through dialogue and education to local audiences. Hands-on demonstrations involving MIYCN champions

within households were used. In turn, the MIYCN champions used the skills learned to motivate their peers. Cooking demonstrations emphasized the preparation and consumption of locally produced, nutritious foods, adapting into a platform for co-creating local recipes to promote diet diversity, tailored to various age groups and physiological needs.

To dispel misconceptions and taboos surrounding nutritious diets, messages were contextualized and targeted to key influencers such as traditional birth assistants, elderly women, and men. Engagement with influencers, including mothers and fathers-in-law, emphasized priority behaviors, such as encouraging diverse food consumption among adolescents, pregnant women, and breastfeeding mothers, clarifying misunderstandings about beans and potatoes, and dispelling cultural taboos associated with poultry and egg consumption. The program expanded its efforts to include additional practices, promoting family planning, complementary foods, proper nutrition during and after illness, extending breastfeeding beyond six months, birth planning, budgeting, safe delivery, immunization, and supplementation of essential micro-nutrients like Vitamin A and Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation (IFAS). Routine screening for malnutrition and childhood illnesses was advocated through a family-led approach, utilizing measurements like Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) and Integrated Community Case Management (ICCM) for early treatment and referrals.

Transformations involved shifting from large-scale community dialogues to concurrent personalized individual and household discussions. These included identifying obstacles to MIYCN

practices and creating collaborative action plans. Nutrition education was tailored for greater impact and anchor groups, categorized by age, introduced. As agents of change, Anchor groups facilitated interactive community dialogues and mobilized mentors. MIYCN information was integrated into R4N anchor groups to enhance availability of affordable and nutritious food among local vendors.

Regarding adolescent girls, Nawiri achieved a positive shift in the percentage of adolescent girls accessing family planning services. There was a rise of adolescents accessing these services from 13% in October 2022 to 34% in August 2023 according to KHIS data. This improvement was occasioned by incorporating adolescent sexual and reproductive health topics into weekly safe space sessions and training of 106 boy and girl mentors. The program adapted its approach to on-site mentorship, fostering a more inclusive service delivery for adolescents.

To enhance data quality, Nawiri collaborated with the Ministry of Health to implement an electronic Community Health Information System (e-CHIS). The program also trained and mentored healthcare workers, reaching a total of 676 individuals. Additionally, Nawiri trained key front line staff and health workers such as mentors and CHPs to improve access to health and nutrition education.

Nawiri's collaboration with children was particularly innovative. By working with local children, households within the community that did not have latrines were identified.



34% rise of adolescents accessing health and nutrition services in 2023, up from 13% in 2022.

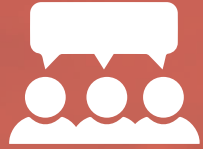


106 Boy and girl mentors trained to provide sexual and reproductive health safe space services.



676 Individuals reached by Health care workers who had been trained and mentored.

Socio-cultural systems facilitate sustained reductions in acute malnutrition



Increased participation in community dialogues from 61% in Y3 to 76% in Y4



118

Male champions trained on health nutrition and VLSA



273

Boy groups Established



475

Girl groups Established

In Y4, Nawiri leveraged on socio-cultural systems to combat acute malnutrition. The engagement in community dialogues increased to 76%, marking a notable rise from 61% in Y3. This emphasis was placed on addressing issues such as gender inequality, household decision-making, and access to food and nutrition services.

A total of 84 community leaders, including local chiefs, police officers, and youth representatives were trained on addressing Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). As a result, they actively supported initiatives to combat violence which led to improved psychosocial well-being within the communities. Furthermore, Nawiri implemented a male engagement strategy that involved 88 male champions from Turkana and 30 from Samburu. The champions played a pivotal role in influencing gender norms and prioritizing nutrition at both household and community levels. In addition, the community engagement strategy reached 6,569 members.

Consequently, key messages focused on building nutrition resilience were disseminated. The aim of community engagement is to facilitate an effective implementation of programs. It also fosters community involvement in Turkana and Samburu through a comprehensive, step-by-step approach that upholds integrity, transparency, and collaboration, and prioritizes active community participation empowering them as decision-makers to shape their success and address their unique circumstances.

Intergenerational dialogues bring together individuals of different age groups, fostering improved participation among women and youth. The dialogues enhance their knowledge and skills in feeding and care practices. An additional approach known as the “moonlight system” engaged Boy groups in evening mentor sessions that allowed them to fulfill their daytime herding responsibilities.



This innovative approach contributed significantly to the program’s overall success. Notably, the integration of livelihood elements and economic empowerment elements into the GIRL-H and Boy groups, enhanced income-generating activities (IGA) which in turn led to tangible improvements in nutritional outcomes for program participants.

Despite those achievements, several ongoing challenges demanded careful attention. One notable hurdle was the time constraints faced by women, impeding their full engagement in program activities. This became a crucial factor when implementing various interventions within households and among anchor group members. Furthermore, it was essential to coordinate efforts related to sequencing, layering, and integration (SLI) with other partners operating in Nawiri villages to prevent participants from being overwhelmed. Additionally, ongoing initiatives are in place to create a standardized curriculum for GIRL-H and Boy groups with the aim of elevating the program’s effectiveness and overall impact.



“I have come to understand why my son needs to consume a variety of nutrients from different food groups to stay healthy. Despite not having a formal education, our group mentor has shared essential knowledge with us ensuring that we can safeguard our children’s health through providing a balanced diet and nutritious varieties.”

Nterewua Lengiro, a member of the Nabuisho GIRL-H group and resident of Embu village, Westgate area, Samburu, proudly displaying a plate of food.



Benson Nadunga, secretary for Namakat pasture production farmers, arranges fodder bales at Namakat farm, Turkana, to be sold at the market



Livestock eating pasture produced from Nawiri-supported Namakat pasture production farm, Turkana

Natural resources are rehabilitated and protected to reinforce reductions in acute malnutrition

Nawiri actively collaborated with the communities and County governments of Turkana and Samburu to enhance practices and technologies aimed at mitigating climate risks and improving natural resources management (NRM). The main focus was on restoring and sustainably managing rangelands to ensure year-round pasture production and availability. Currently, over 63,000 hectares of land are under improved rangeland management practices, surpassing the Y4 target by 215%.

In Turkana South, particularly in Lokichar, Nawiri conducted extensive training for 35 multi-sectoral stakeholders. The training focused on best practices in rangeland and environmental management. This included bush control, forage preservation, equitable range and water distribution, and drought cycle management. Trainers developed plans for community awareness campaigns and participatory rangeland management committees.

These committees played a crucial role in guiding rangeland management institutions, strengthening early warning systems, and improving livestock productivity through enhanced monitoring of rangeland quality.

In Samburu, Nawiri was actively involved in rehabilitating degraded lands across various production sites. Hybrid rangeland management committees have significantly impacted grazing plans in different regions, influencing pastoralists' attitudes towards rangeland management and environmental conservation. The rehabilitation activities in Samburu County have transformed pastoralist communities' perceptions, especially in regions that were once conflict zones along grazing areas.

Nawiri also conducted resource mapping exercises and initiated rangeland rehabilitation initiatives in multiple wards across Turkana West and Samburu East. The overarching goal was to promote pasture production and sustainable rangeland management to enhance nutrition and well-being within these communities.

Additionally, extensive training provided to Samburu County Resource Team/TOTs widened skills acquisition for sustainability purposes, covering participatory rangeland management, agro-ecological and resilience design approaches, best practices in environmental conservation, and the incorporation of nutritional messaging in government interventions at the sub-county level.

Sustained, peaceful coexistence, including in the face of climate and non-climate related challenges

The integration of peace initiatives within natural resource management (NRM) led to a significant shift in the perception of Nawiri communities towards peaceful conflict resolution. Currently, 78.6% of Nawiri participants believe that violence should never be justified as a means to advance a social or political cause. This marks a significant increase from the 61.6% recorded in Y3.

The program integrated strategic peace interventions within anchor groups and other platforms. Subsequently, peace-building sessions were conducted throughout the year for selected producer groups in Logetei and Ateker villages in Elbarta ward, Samburu North. These sessions aimed at facilitating skills exchange, open discussions about challenges, and sharing of experiences to improve livelihoods, promote peaceful coexistence, and challenge traditional pastoralist mindsets. To address the connection between conflict and PAM, Nawiri collaborated with the Turkana County Peace Directorate. As a result, 69 Hybrid Committees were formed to enhance coordination and the capacity of peace actors.

In Samburu North, inter-elder dialogues were facilitated to establish sustainable strategies for NRM, planning grazing zones, strengthening early warning systems, and reducing insecurity incidents. The expansion of hybrid committees in Samburu County involved the establishment of 33 sub-committees with 622 members. The aim of the sub-committees was to combat PAM by enhancing resource management, environmental practices, market linkages, conflict resolution mechanisms, and grazing planning. The ultimate objective was to improve access, availability, and utilization of fodder, milk, and food items in communities affected by shocks and stresses, while simultaneously serving as a conduit for peacebuilding within and across communities.

Peace-building sessions were conducted throughout the year for selected producer groups in Logetei and Ateker villages in Elbarta ward, Samburu North. These sessions, aimed at facilitating skills exchange, open discussions about challenges, and sharing of experiences to improve livelihoods, promote peaceful coexistence, and challenge traditional pastoralist mindsets.

78.6% 

Nawiri participants who currently believe that violence should never be justified as a means to advance a social or political cause.

69 

Hybrid Committees were formed to enhance coordination and the capacity of peace actors

33 

Sub-committees established in the expansion of hybrid committees in Samburu County, with a total of 622 members.

Nurturing Peace and Promoting Nutrition Resilience for Communities living in along the Kenya, South Sudan, and Ethiopia Borders



Recognizing conflict as a root cause of malnutrition, USAID Nawiri launched interventions in 2021, proving to be a game-changer in the Turkana North belt, bordering South Sudan and Ethiopia.

In 2019, the Mercy Corps-led Nawiri Nutrition program identified alarming malnutrition rates in conflict-prone areas of Turkana, Kenya. These rates were linked to resource-based conflicts within and beyond national borders. USAID Nawiri, in its Wave 1, 2019 longitudinal studies, revealed the impact of conflicts on nutrition, with Turkana North experiencing a 30.2% Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate and Turkana South and East following closely at 30.2%.

The study revealed that the situation was exacerbated by the frequent cattle rustling and prolonged drought, limiting community involvement in livelihoods and exacerbating food insecurity. Livestock, vital for the Turkana community's nomadic pastoralism, became a casualty of conflicts, displacing people and disrupting their way of life.

Recognizing conflict as a root cause of malnutrition, USAID Nawiri launched interventions in 2021, proving to be a game-changer in the Turkana North belt, bordering South Sudan and Ethiopia. Positive outcomes include peaceful coexistence and equitable resource sharing among Turkana of Kenya, Nyangatom and Daasenach of Ethiopia, and Toposa of South Sudan.

The USAID Nawiri program has adopted a peace and natural resource model that is guided by a participatory rangeland management approach. This approach involves coordinating efforts across various components, including government, community, livestock, and rangeland, to ensure effective and inclusive management.

Mr. Sammy Lokolong, Senior Natural Resource Management at USAID Nawiri, explains, "By enhancing collaborative planning of grazing patterns and involving the community and local leadership in identifying designated grazing lands preserved for use during drought, we've successfully identified 3,000 acres of land in Kibish sub-County. These rangelands have played a crucial role in safeguarding the community against the loss of their livestock, the primary source of food.

With dedicated pasture reserves for livestock use during dry periods, community members can rely on productive livestock fetching good prices in the market. The income generated allows them to purchase a variety of nutritious foods, significantly improving household nutrition outcomes."

The impact of our peace initiative is evident in Turkana North, Nyangatom and Turkana, once engaged in conflicts, were now peacefully grazing together, demonstrating a newfound brotherhood.

One of the Nyangatom herders happily mentioned. "We have fought with each other for a long time. Many lives have been lost. We have resorted to living together as brothers. From experience, raids have never helped us. They have always been the cause of increased enmity and a major cause of death.

We now need peace. Currently, we are grazing together on the Kenyan side and the moment water and pasture get exhausted here we will move with our Turkana neighbors to the Ethiopian side where we can graze together as we work on strengthening our peaceful coexistence."

In a remarkable turn of events just a year into the implementation of program interventions, Turkana North is witnessing encouraging improvements in nutrition outcomes, with the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates showing positive progress, according to the annual SMART Survey.

The SMART survey data for June 2023 in Turkana North demonstrated a notable reduction of nearly 2%, dropping from the initial 30.2% in 2019 to 28.6%. This positive change is directly correlated with the peace achieved in the region over the last three consecutive years, marked by the equitable sharing of resources.

To mitigate against the looming threat of floods caused by El Niño rains, USAID Nawiri actively reached out to communities via a Radio Talk Show aired on Biblia Husema Radio. This outreach specifically focused on areas prone to flooding, offering advice to residents on readiness and promoting the idea of relocating to higher ground.

The talk show played a crucial role in enlightening communities about Disaster Risk Reduction Approaches, enhancing their ability to withstand future challenges. Beyond its impact on malnutrition, the USAID Nawiri program stands out for fostering a profound peace that has transformed conflict-ridden landscapes into harmonious environments where communities thrive together.



"We have fought with each other for a long time. Many lives have been lost. We have resorted to living together as brothers. From experience, raids have never helped us. They have always been the cause of increased enmity and a major cause of death.

Enhancing integrated planning at the ward level for acute malnutrition reduction and strengthening government institutional capacity to address persistent acute malnutrition

Over the past year, Nawiri actively generated demand for specific public services as part of its efforts to strengthen government institutions. These services, such as agriculture extension, natural resources management, alternative livelihoods, basic health, nutrition, water, and sanitation, have become integral components of Nawiri’s comprehensive approach. In Y4, a total of 64,696 participants reported access to these public services, representing a 32% increase from the targeted 48,762 participants. Nawiri additionally played a crucial role in shaping the 3rd generation county integrated development plan (CIDP 2023 - 2027) for Turkana and Samburu Counties, contributing to an amplified impact. Furthermore, the program advocated for increased budgetary allocations in nutrition-sensitive sectors, resulting in significant changes in the budgets for Turkana and Samburu Counties.

Despite a decrease in health sector allocations due to the cessation of conditional grants and a reduction in water sector allocation in Turkana, Nawiri ensured authentic community voices were considered through extensive community engagement during the ward development planning (WDP) process. Additionally, Nawiri advocated for and influenced the use of its research findings into the CIDP, encouraging government co-investment and establishing a foundation for long-term sustainability. The program emphasized cross-sector linkages in the development of draft CIDPs, securing budgetary provisions within the comprehensive five-year strategic plan. In Samburu, Nawiri’s advocacy efforts led to a fivefold increase in nutrition intervention allocation in the CIDP, illustrating the program’s impact on advancing nutritional well-being.

Nawiri further enhanced the capacity of non-state actors by reaching 72 representatives from local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in nutrition governance orientation sessions. The sessions equipped them with skills to integrate health and nutrition components into their programs, improve resource mobilization and proposal development. To expand its operations, the program collaborated with three additional Local Implementing Partners (LIPs), that is FCDO, PACIDA and Samburu’s Children Program, reinforcing its commitment to localization and community-driven interventions. The program’s achievements showcase its innovative and community-centered approach, setting a high standard for community-driven development initiatives.

Nawiri successfully implemented the WDP model, achieving 65% of the Y4 target with 23 wards having WDPs. High-level stakeholders received orientation on the model’s ten critical steps, and legislatures in Samburu and Turkana committed a significant portion of the development budget to address community priorities at the ward level.



Furthermore, Nawiri expanded the formation of ward development planning committees (WDPCs), covering additional wards in Samburu and Turkana. This initiative resulted in enhanced community engagement and increased participation in local development initiatives. WDPC members received comprehensive training on nutrition resilience and resource mobilization that enabled them to advocate effectively during the CIDP public participation process. Additionally, collaboration with the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) further strengthened community resilience through the development of contingency plans. At least 54% of Nawiri participants reported using climate and risk information for contingency planning and reinforcing positive impacts in Turkana and Samburu Counties.

Nawiri expanded the formation of ward development planning committees (WDPCs), covering additional wards in Samburu and Turkana.

64,696

Participants who accessed public services in Y4, representing a 32% increase.

72

Representatives from local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) involved in nutrition governance orientation sessions

54%

Nawiri participants who reported using climate and risk information in Turkana and Samburu Counties

Information systems are used for effective decision-making, learning, and adaptation

Nawiri collaborated with various county government departments to enhance information systems which significantly boosted the program's performance. The program's Data and Information Advisors, seconded to the county governments, played a crucial role in supporting the development of a statistics bulletin for evidence-based planning in the CIDP process.

Nawiri assisted in creating the Result Framework post the CIDP development, focusing on key indicators and monitoring strategies for implementation evaluation. The program, in collaboration with the national treasury, trained directors on the Electronic County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (E-Cimes) platform. E-Cimes is an electronic monitoring and evaluation system established to monitor the implementation of projects and programs outlined in the CIDP.

Nawiri also supported performance reviews and the finalization of county annual reports, contributing to the development of the annual development plan for the year 2024/2025.

In pursuit of robust information systems, Nawiri facilitated benchmarking trips for senior leadership to Vihiga and Wajir counties. This aimed to prepare for the acquisition of a new Geographical Information Systems (GIS) online portal that would enhance cross-sectoral data management for real-time decision-making.

Nawiri further supported the Turkana County Government in developing the county indicator handbook. The handbook is a detailed Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework linked to sustainable development goals (SDGs) for tracking program implementation.

To ensure evidence-based ward development planning, Nawiri referenced NDMA's data forward/community contingency planning. These plans, implemented across 35 target wards, have been crucial for coordinating El Nino responses. Nawiri collaborated with NDMA and Agriculture Sector Development Support Programme (ASDP) to conduct participatory scenario planning meetings, preparing advisories for enhanced October to December rains. The dissemination of advisories included climate risk information through local leaders, anchor groups, and radio stations.

Nawiri's collaboration with the Department of Social Protection further led to the successful implementation of an enhanced single registry for vulnerable community members. This registry aids in coordinating social protection support, eliminating duplicates, and promoting equitable distribution. The program aims to integrate this system seamlessly within the counties, ensuring sustained support for vulnerable anchor group members.

Continuing its work with the Directorate of Monitoring and Evaluation, Nawiri strengthened county M&E processes through the CIMES. This involved orienting new leadership on the draft M&E policy, lobbying for legislation, and conducting Data Quality Assessments (DQAs) and County Program Reviews. The evidence generated from these processes informed program adaptation and strategy development hence contributing to the Y5 program resource estimate proposal and selection of critical outcomes for the cost extension phase.

A mid-term evaluation has been commissioned to assess effective pathways for prioritized scale-up, demonstrating Nawiri's commitment to adaptive management.

Continuing its work with the Directorate of Monitoring and Evaluation, Nawiri strengthened county M&E processes through the CIMES.

USAID Nawiri's Key Approaches

Nutritional Support and Resilience Approach

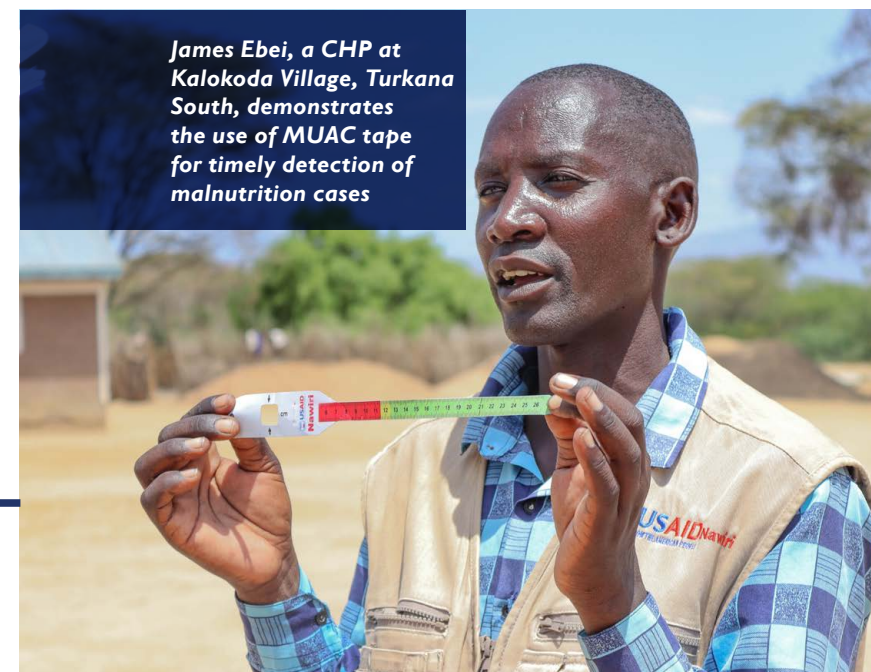
To enhance the sustainable reduction of persistent acute malnutrition, Nawiri adopted a nutritional support and resilience approach technically referred to as 'case management for nutrition resilience (CMNR)'. This overarching approach guarantees coordinated implementation and tracking of the multi-sectoral interventions delivered to program participants. To ensure immediate, underlying, and basic drivers of malnutrition are simultaneously addressed, common vision and action plans aligned to Nawiri's five pillars for nutrition resilience were developed. The action plans facilitated strategic layering and integration of nutrition-specific and sensitive interventions at individual, household, anchor group, and community levels which consists of the following:

- Nutrition screening in households (HHs), anchor groups and integrated outreach, referral/linkages, and treatment of acute malnutrition cases.
- Identification, referral and/or treatment of common childhood illnesses.
- Provision of integrated package of multi-sectoral interventions based on differential individual and household vulnerabilities.

- Community and HH dialogues on key behaviors and practices for nutrition resilience.
- HH mentorship and follow-up of anchor group HHs.
- Monitoring and following up with program participants to inform interventions and support needed, track results and outcomes using progress markers.

Nawiri used both WHZ (weight-for-height-z score) and mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) measurements for identifying undernourished children during routine nutrition screening for case management.

Notably, adolescents and adult anchor group members were also screened using both MUAC and Body Mass Index (BMI) for age and/or BMI. In Y4, Nawiri screened 23,247 (19,509 Female; 3,738 Male) participants through CMNR activities. The approach will be scaled up in Y5, targeting a total of 48,209 anchor group participants across 43 communities. Implementation of CMNR interventions will be done through CHVs and anchor group mentors.



James Ebei, a CHP at Kalokoda Village, Turkana South, demonstrates the use of MUAC tape for timely detection of malnutrition cases

Nawiri used both WHZ and MUAC measurements for identifying undernourished children during nutrition screening.

Community Integrated Assessment and Action Planning (CIAAP)

Embodying Nawiri's principles of decentralization and empowerment, the aim of the CIAAP process is to engage communities as partners rather than passive recipients of aid. When a community decides to partner with Nawiri, they agree to lead, manage, and own their development journey that will sustainably reduce malnutrition. Nawiri's role is one of facilitation, with activities designed to unlock local potential and solutions towards a shared vision of nutrition resilience.

CIAAP has been instrumental in affirming the presence and plans of government agencies and other humanitarian and development actors in target villages, setting the stage for localized joint work planning and monitoring. Nawiri takes advantage of the CIAAP process to mobilize communities to identify their priorities, explore determinants of change, define solutions, identify resources, and develop social accountability for social and behavioral change within each community.

By the end of Quarter 3 in Y4, Nawiri facilitated the first steps of CIAAP in 352 villages, 88 in Samburu, and 264 in Turkana. The CIAAP process plays a crucial role in targeting participants in an integrated manner and efficiently allocating programmatic time and resources, forming the foundation for Nawiri's initiatives.

However, it is important to acknowledge that, while essential, the CIAAP process did come with a heavy time cost at a point when Nawiri needed to rapidly scale programming. Anchor group cohorts could only be formed following the step on joint targeting within the CIAAP process. Therefore, in many cases, engaging with the CIAAP process up to joint targeting became the priority so that the program team could begin to scale the anchor group models. Presently, there are many communities in which subsequent steps in CIAAP have not been fully applied, including developing action plans, establishing community governance structures, and joint monitoring.

In Y5, Nawiri commits to continue with the CIAAP process across every community. For example, the CIAAP is designed to be a government-led process that begins with engaging administrators at the Sub-county level, involving all village administrators, so that the community action plans inform ward development

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planning committees (WDPC).

In Y5, the programs will further strengthen these efficiencies, aligning community needs, priorities, and action plans with ward development plans (WDP) and county-integrated development plans (CIDPs). Furthermore, utilizing the WDP in this way will allow other donor partners and the county government to invest resources in alignment with priorities, enhancing accountability to the community and avoiding duplication of efforts. This will promote sustainability and ownership of the process at an early stage.

In Y5, the program will review community action plans to assess progress made in partnership with Nawiri. In addition, a community led program monitoring is critical for communities to take stock of the efforts to reduce PAM. Most importantly, village councils should be established so as to serve as CIAAP's community governance structures linking directly to WDPC.

Local Capacity Development and Digital Technologies

Nawiri utilized digital technologies, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), to enhance local capacity development and program delivery. GIS labs were established in Turkana and Samburu, equipped with advanced computers and mapping tools. Nawiri supported GIS assessments to create a harmonized GIS portal for county departments, promoting evidence-based planning. The program also facilitated benchmarking visits and supported the inauguration of GIS resource centers in other counties to promote the use of geo-spatial data for planning and resource mapping.

For efficient identification and enrollment of vulnerable households, Nawiri employed Commcare, a mobile data collection solution. This was used to digitize community health services tools, enabling real-time access and analysis for joint targeting and enrollment into Nawiri anchor groups. Commcare was also used for data abstraction, annual surveys, post-distribution monitoring, and case management, improving the efficiency and quality of data for planning.

In collaboration with the county government, Nawiri supported the use of electronic reporting through the Kenya Animal Bio-surveillance

System (KABS) mobile application. Community disease reporters (CDRs) were trained to identify syndromic diseases using the KABS application which aided in data collection and analysis. Syndromic diseases refers to a collection of recognizable traits or abnormalities that tend to occur together and are associated with a specific disease in livestock. Smartphones equipped with the KABS app were provided to CDRs, enabling prompt reporting of livestock outbreaks, and informing resource allocation in the livestock sub-sector.

Additionally, Nawiri incorporated non-digital local capacity building activities in Y4. Mentors were trained in business skills, natural resource management, and Baby Friendly Community Initiative (cBFCI) maternal and child feeding practices. These mentors, supporting GIRL-H and Boy groups, cascaded knowledge to participants and collaborated with various committees to manage local resources, promote peacebuilding, and safeguard the environment. Further capacity building included training in interpersonal communication skills for healthcare providers, fostering effective interaction with community members and enhancing community-centered healthcare delivery.



Gender Integration

Gender integration refers to the process of incorporating a gender perspective into various aspects of policies, programs, projects, and activities. The goal is to ensure that considerations related to gender are systematically and comprehensively considered at every stage of planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Nawiri's implementation strategy prioritizes gender integration, particularly in culturally sensitive regions like Samburu and Turkana. Achieving gender equity – which is the fair and impartial treatment of individuals, irrespective of their gender, with the aim of ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities, rights, and access to resources – in such contexts necessitates a thoughtful and nuanced approach.

It is crucial to strike a balance between program objectives and the prevailing sociocultural norms in order to ensure effectiveness in programming and respect for local communities. Anchor groups serve as the primary platform for Nawiri interventions, allowing the program to tailor its approach to the specific local dynamics of gender norms and their impact on nutrition pathways in communities.

Therefore, the program undertook a comprehensive analysis of gender, social, and youth dynamics across population segments to inform the design of the anchor models. In the year under review, 94% of participants in Nawiri-assisted programs were female, an increase from 75% in Y3. The increase was attributed to Nawiri's approach of targeting women as entry points in households for financial and livelihood interventions on R4N, AMTMSG, and GIRL-H groups.


Noteworthy successes in the quest for gender integration included the establishment of men-to-men groups that addressed the historical exclusion of men in nutrition programs despite their importance in household planning and decision-making, gatekeepers, and participants in nutrition services.

The AMTMSGs provided joint training sessions for both men and women and the empowerment of women through savings groups. This approach was designed to address and challenge existing gender disparities and strengthen household economies, leading to joint planning and decision-making by all genders for nutrition outcomes. Furthermore, the program's approach involved a careful and respectful effort to question entrenched cultural practices and norms in a bid to advance gender equity and enhance nutritional outcomes.


For instance, the program involved men in cooking demonstrations, which not only enhanced their participation but also challenged traditional gender roles in food preparation. Additionally, men were also involved in sandal-making as a livelihood activity. The women complemented the finished product with beadwork.

In collaboration with the education department, as exemplified by the 'Ujuzi Mashinani' program, morans and young girls were trained to acquire vocational, entrepreneurial, and life skills. Additionally, they received SSBC messaging on alternative livelihoods and mentorship to transition youth into self and wage employment.

94%



Female participants in Nawiri-assisted programs, an increase from 75% in Y3, following the targeting of women as entry points in households for financial and livelihood interventions.



Successes in gender integration included the establishment of men-to-men groups that addressed the historical exclusion of men in nutrition programs despite their importance in household planning and decision-making, gatekeepers, and participants in nutrition services.



Nawiri's implementation strategy prioritizes gender integration, particularly in culturally sensitive regions like Samburu and Turkana. Achieving gender equity – which is the fair and impartial treatment of individuals, irrespective of their gender, with the aim of ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities, rights, and access to resources – in such contexts necessitates a thoughtful and nuanced approach.

This initiative aimed to reduce the number of idle youth and address negative cultural norms and beliefs that hinder youth from achieving their aspirations, ultimately leading to improved nutrition outcomes for all genders in the communities. Due to the low attendance of morans in Boy groups, the program scheduled mentorship sessions in the evenings, allowing them to actively participate without disrupting their daytime herding duties.

To promote CLTS in Samburu, Nawiri engaged men early in the morning and separately from other people (women and children), which is more suited to their schedule and availability.

This approach ensured the perspective of all community members, including men who have previously viewed Nawiri as a program designed for women, were considered and addressed.

To tackle sensitive topics like gender-based violence (GBV), Nawiri relied on locally designated resource persons, popularly referred to as community gatekeepers, who played a pivotal role in raising awareness on this critical issue. Finally, the program's close collaboration with the County governments of Turkana and Samburu through the gender sector working groups (SWG) actively contributed to shaping supportive policies related to gender matters.

Youth Engagement



An Ujuzi Mashinani participant skillfully demonstrates the crafting of leather sandals during a benchmarking visit at Kariokor Market, Nairobi

In Y4, Nawiri actively engaged the youth. Among the participants in Nawiri-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (such as assets, credit, income, or employment), 46% of were youth. This represents an increase from 45% recorded in Y3. The rise was attributed to a greater enrollment of adolescent youth in Nawiri's GIRL-H, Boy groups, and TVETs.

In addition to the GIRL-H and Boy groups, which specifically focus on young boys and girls, including adolescents, the program also involved the youth through an initiative known as the 'Ujuzi Mashinani' to bring vocational skills closer to out-of-school morans and teenage girls in Samburu County. The objective of the program was to equip participants with vocational skills by providing courses relevant to the local job market. The target beneficiaries were adolescent girls and young women, adolescent boys and young men, out-of-school pregnant and lactating mothers, and young women with children under five of age. The young people got the opportunity to enroll in one of the seven courses offered, including construction and masonry, beauty and hairdressing, tailoring, dressmaking, electrical works, plumbing, and

catering. So far, 298 youth have been enrolled in Baragoi and are looking to scale to Wamba and Waso Wards. So far, 298 youth have been enrolled in Baragoi and the initiative will be scaled to other wards as well as in Turkana county.

The results of the labor market assessment (LMA) conducted in Y3 revealed that young people face challenges in securing self-employment or wage employment due to a lack of essential vocational training skills. In Y4, Nawiri actively engaged the youth through a visioning process to allow them to identify their aspirations and career goals. Additionally, the program collaborated with the Department of Vocational Education and Institutions to develop the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) model with the aim of extending vocational education opportunities to rural areas in Turkana and Samburu. To address the varying needs of the youth from various villages, including those interested in easily attainable skills like shoemaking, the program engaged trained trainers from Aberu Kori Ushanga Cooperative Society in Turkana South. These trainers provided value addition training, diversified product offerings, and facilitated the admission of 50 participants from the GIRL-H groups as cooperative members. This cooperative membership enabled them to access aggregation and marketing networks.

The training in traditional shoemaking and beadwork provides accessible opportunities for youth to acquire income-generating skills. Not only does this training improve access to traditional shoes, which are not readily available in remote villages, but it also enhances their skill set, opening up new avenues for economic empowerment.

Engaging Other Marginalized People



A CLTS champion from Namunyak village in Samburu washing his hands next to the recently constructed pit latrines.

This initiative was significant because it recognized the importance of involving children in the process of improving sanitation, which is often linked to the overall health and well-being of the community.

In Samburu County, Nawiri adopted an inclusive and community-oriented approach to tackle the sanitation challenges faced by communities. Specifically, the program targeted marginalized children in CLTS promotion, as exemplified by a successful case in Lomirok, Samburu North. This initiative was significant because it recognized the importance of involving children in the process of improving sanitation, which is often linked to the overall health and well-being of the community. In many marginalized areas, access to proper sanitation facilities was limited, with households lacking latrines, which posed health and environmental risks.

Nawiri's collaboration with children was particularly innovative. By working with local children, households within the community that did not have latrines were identified. This method not only raised awareness

about the importance of sanitation but also empowered children to be active participants in addressing CLTS.

The results of this collaboration were encouraging. Many households that were identified as lacking latrines took action to construct them. This improved sanitation and hygiene practices, playing a supportive role in maintaining health and preventing conditions that might increase malnutrition. Additionally, by involving children in this process, the program promoted a sense of responsibility and engagement among the younger generation in addressing community challenges.

Private Sector Engagement



Participants showcased their handmade products, which continue to play a significant role in creating livelihoods and supporting them to address their nutritional needs.

In Y4, Nawiri organized a financial inclusion expo in Baragoi town. The expo aimed at strategically leveraging opportunities to collaborate with the private sector for long-term business relationships while enhancing access to crucial government and financial services for the program's last-mile participants and general population.

The LMA highlighted limited access to finance and financial services for micro and small enterprises by participants who have the potential to enhance the availability and affordability of nutritious and safe foods locally. As a result, in collaboration with financial institutions, government departments, and private service providers in Samburu County, Nawiri facilitated access to these services to the community in Baragoi and neighbouring far-flung or last-mile villages.

Through this initiative, the program engaged 38 private sector entities, including Safaricom, NHIF, Huduma Centre Services, Banks, Saccos, etc. Over the two days of the event, 1,125 individuals were reached with financial services.

Furthermore, similar approaches were implemented in other events, such as the Northern Kenya Impact Conference (NKIC), which was attended by program representatives from newly established business groups in Ntaletiani and Nachola in Samburu North, and Lorubae in Samburu East. At the conference, financiers and investors made commitments to support impact investments aimed at contributing to the sustainable development of the region.

Further, the participants showcased their handmade products, which continue to play a significant role in creating livelihoods and supporting them to address their nutritional needs.

This exposure visit is expected to play a significant role in supporting the initiation and expansion of businesses by GIRL-H group members, increasing household income, and enhancing access to nutritious foods during times of shock and stress.

Nawiri additionally engaged private sector players in the education system, like the Baragoi TVET Centre, offering programs like the Ujuzi Mashinani aimed at bringing education closer for out-of-school morans and teenage girls in Samburu County. The TVET center offered vocational courses relevant to the local job market, targeting adolescent girls, young mothers, adolescent boys, young men, out-of-school pregnant and lactating mothers, and young mothers with children under five.

In Turkana, Nawiri collaborated with the Aberu Kori Ushanga Cooperative, which provided value-added skills for 50 GIRL-H participants on beadwork, fostering economic empowerment through income-generating skills.

Throughout the year, Nawiri seized valuable opportunities for learning and benchmarking through engagement with the private sector. We organized a series of learning visits aimed at allowing program participants to gain insights from established businesses. For instance, as part of the Ujuzi Mashinani program, Nawiri facilitated a visit for 12 participants from Samburu North and Samburu East to the Kenya Leather Development Council (KLDC) and the Kariokor market in Nairobi.

This visit offered firsthand experience of the daily operations of successful SMEs in the leather industry. It fostered interactions with business owners and vendors while providing valuable insights into their strategies and best practices. Additionally, GIRL-H and Boy anchor group members acquired new techniques in beadwork, leather crafting, basketry, and explored markets for hides and skins.

Further, a benchmarking visit was organized for 34 livestock traders representing 34 villages and 182 Nawiri's R4N livestock business groups in Samburu. This visit took place at the Merille livestock market in Marsabit County. It provided a unique opportunity for these groups to adopt best practices, incorporate innovation, establish livestock market cooperatives, and cultivate collaborative relationships with existing cooperatives strategically located along livestock migratory routes and trade corridors in Samburu.

Nawiri created new partnerships in the livestock trade sector with three key livestock off-takers/export slaughterhouses in Nairobi namely, Choice Meats Ltd (CML), Kenya Meat Commission (KMC), and Neema Livestock and Slaughtering Investment LTD (NLSIL). The slaughter houses hosted wholesalers and Livestock Market Association (LMA) members from Samburu County for business discussions. Neema Livestock

Slaughterhouse awarded supply orders to goat and sheep wholesalers from Samburu County, who will supply a minimum of 200 goats per month. Further, as of October 2023, the Kenya Meat Commission visited Lomidat slaughter in Turkana North to explore opportunities for buying local livestock, slaughtering packaging, and transporting the meat for export markets and also as an incentive to livestock traders in Turkana North to supply KMC with livestock through the Lomidat slaughterhouse.

38 

Private sector entities engaged through the LMA initiative, including Safaricom, NHIF, Huduma Centre Services, Banks, Saccos, etc.

1,125 

Individuals reached with financial services over the two days of the event.

50 

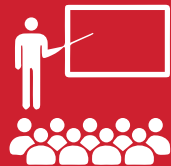
GIRL-H participants who received value-added skills on beadwork through collaboration with the Aberu Kori Ushanga Cooperative,



Livestock traders in Samburu have been supported to attend benchmarking visits which have ultimately connected them to new markets.

Climate Change and Climate Finance

When these CSA practices are adopted by households that have access to water sources, they play a pivotal role in ensuring the consistent availability of nutritious fresh vegetables.



59

Producer groups who attended training sessions on Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) principles organized by Nawiri.



63,095

Hectares of land were under improved management practices or technologies that promote improved climate risk reduction and/or natural resources management.



54.7%

Participants had access to climate and risk information for contingency planning and use.

In Y4, Nawiri organized training sessions for 59 producer groups (35 in Samburu and 24 in Turkana), with a specific focus on climate-smart agriculture (CSA) principles. The implementation of CSA techniques around soil management, crop management, pest and disease management, and water conservation has been demonstrated to have a positive impact on agriculture by increasing productivity, enhancing resilience, and mitigating the challenges posed by climate change. When these CSA practices are adopted by households that have access to water sources, they play a pivotal role in ensuring the consistent availability of nutritious fresh vegetables.

The annual survey indicated that 63,095 hectares of land were under improved management practices or technologies that promote improved climate risk reduction and/or natural resources management. The survey also reveals that 54.7% of participants had access to climate and risk information for contingency planning and use.

CSA also has the potential to boost participants' income, either by selling their agricultural produce or by saving money that would otherwise have been spent on purchasing vegetables from markets, particularly when such vegetables are scarce or expensive. The localized production of fresh vegetables not only simplifies distribution to remote areas but also contributes to a reduction in living expenses, offers a more varied dietary selection, and results in improved nutrition outcomes for the communities being targeted.

Sustainability Plan and Exit Strategy

Nawiri remains steadfast in its commitment to the program's vision for sustainable change which is rooted in the theory of change that envisions a reduction in acute malnutrition when government institutions embrace a multisectoral approach, and citizens actively participate in implementation and oversight. Nawiri aims to strengthen ownership by county governments of the program goals, improve investments in key program intervention and services, empower communities to take ownership of nutrition-sensitive action plans, and provide mentorship and progressive takeover of activities by other local external actors and service providers.

In order to increase ownership and phase transition of the implementation to other key stakeholders, the program is co-creating and co-

implementing program intervention with county governments, local implementing partners, the private sector, and communities. At the same time, the program is engaging executive and legislative arms of county government to advocate for appropriate policies and legal frameworks to support the adoption, scale, and funding of these interventions.

The operationalization of our sustainability approach occurs throughout the program's lifecycle, with a particular focus during years 5-8, where high-level approaches for each year involving the government, local implementing partners, private sector, and formal community structures will be implemented.

As highlighted in our PREP 5 and cost extension submissions, our strategies are centered around these approaches:



Market systems development (MSD) and service delivery approach to strengthen establishment, distribution and delivery of food products, financial services and nutrition commodities through local actors and private sector service providers.



Community owned and led planning processes via the community integrated assessment and action planning (CIAAPs) through existing community governance structures (Village Councils and Ward Development Planning Committees) to safeguard the investments of the program.



Linkages of community plans to formal planning structures where the CIAAPs developed in Y4 provide detailed community nutrition-sensitive plans that will inform the WDPCs model across the 35 priority wards to embed nutrition planning in local development plans and budgets.



Addressing enabling environments in HHs and communities to ensure sustainability of behaviors and practices, through community and household visioning and action planning; and community capacity strengthening for CHVs, community leaders and anchor group mentors to give them skills and abilities to facilitate effective community, group, and household dialogues to transfer skills that the communities will utilize to sustain positive behaviors and practices even after the program end.



Broaden and strengthen the capacity of LIPs as a key part of Nawiri's sustainability and exit strategy and focus on localization which will be critical for increasing sustainability of service delivery in nutrition specific and sensitive services.



Continued support to the operationalization of CIDP 3.0.

Stories of Impact

Surviving the Persistent Threat of Malnutrition: A Mother's Tale of Loss and Resilience in Turkana, Kenya.



“You cannot compare the terrible pain brought by drought to that of a bee sting or the sharp prick of a thorn. It is a very painful feeling that is almost similar to the grief associated with losing a loved one - it pierces right through the heart.” These are the desperate words of Christine Ekamais, a mother of five, as she attempts to describe the plight of villagers in Nadunga which is located in the Pelekech ranges of Turkana North.

The stories emerging from this village bear striking similarities. They start out with a happy childhood filled with plenty of food, thriving families and productive livestock. What follows is a state of humanitarian crisis marked by shocks and stresses attributed to perennial seasons of drought.

Akamais fondly recalls growing up in the neighboring Lochupua village, located in the Kaeris Ward, where she lived with her parents and two siblings. Back then, the area was endowed with natural resources she describes as ‘enough for survival’. This included water, pasture, and a diverse array of

indigenous trees that lined the sandy banks of the Nakalale river. Her family proudly maintained a large herd of goats and camels, preserving the age-old tradition of the pastoralist Turkana community.

“In our childhood years, we spent most of our playtime along the riverbanks. Girls fetched water and collected firewood, while boys took care of the livestock. Retracing this experience is not complete without mentioning how we enjoyed eating nutritious wild fruits including *Edome*, *Nkalalio* (*Hyssop*) and *Esekon* (*Salvadora persica*),” she narrates amidst smiles.

A few years later, the community observed significant environmental changes, with rainfall becoming scarce and the sun growing more relentless. The landscape once covered in native grass turned dry and dusty. The once-productive trees lining the banks of river Nakalale suddenly dried up and a new invasive *prosopis juliflora* shrub species locally known as *etirae* took over.

“In our community, there is a common belief that in the past, God was present among us, because he responded swiftly to our pleas whenever we faced drought. However, in recent times, we have endured prolonged drought, leading us to believe that God may have forsaken us and relocated to a distant place,” says Akamais, whose face turns pale.

She describes the successive periods of drought as the most harrowing experience she has ever faced in life. Watching their precious herd of cattle disappear and the heart-wrenching loss of her three-year-old sister, Akai, left her feeling utterly desperate.

“This was a period that left us with devastating memories. In our community, children mostly rely on milk for their food. Regrettably, the absence of livestock deprived my sister of milk, leading to her sudden death,” reflects Akamais.

Thanks to the government emergency relief programs, her family later secured essential supplies, including yellow maize, maize flour, cooking oil, beans, and salt. However, accessing water was

a challenge, as they had to queue for the government-provided water tanker or rely on the village water pump, which was almost running dry.

Years later, Akamais found herself embracing new roles as both mother and wife. With the new titles came duties that demanded adaptability. Besides this transformation, she utilized the meager savings collected from the KES 3,000 cash transfers received from the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to support livelihood activities.

“As a mother, I couldn’t simply rely on food donations to provide for my family. The circumstances forced me to find alternative means of earning extra income. This involved undertaking tasks like constructing huts, producing charcoal, and selling bundles of firewood, among other activities,” she explains.

Akamais animatedly narrates, “The arrival of Nawiri in Nadung’a marked the beginning of a new era for our community, long plagued by malnutrition. The program is unique because it involves the community in every step of finding collective and sustainable solutions to the problem of malnutrition.”



“You cannot compare the terrible pain brought by drought to that of a bee sting or the sharp prick of a thorn. It is a very painful feeling that is almost similar to the grief associated with losing a loved one - it pierces right through the heart.” *Christine Ekamais says.*

She says, “The community strongly supported Nawiri because the engagement sessions helped everyone understand its important mission and their essential role in its success. We believe Nawiri is an answered prayer because it has managed to keep the whole community active and productive.”

In Nadunga, where the majority of residents depend on livestock production, the persistent drought and its effect on livestock have resulted in a staggering increase in poverty levels, reaching 98.4%. The combination of an extreme poverty rate, elevated food prices, and limited access to basic necessities such as healthcare, education, and clean water has led to a significant prevalence of malnutrition.

She takes immense pride in her involvement with the Adapted Mother-To-Mother Support Groups (AM2MSGs), which have empowered numerous women in her village with strategies to combat malnutrition. What particularly motivates her is the group’s emphasis on prioritizing vulnerable individuals like pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and young children, with the goal of breaking the cycle of malnutrition.

“I am glad that women and children are being prioritized because they are the ones who are mostly affected. As a result of the training I received in the support group, I have become actively engaged in cultivating a variety of vegetables. These include *sukuma wiki* (*kale*), *murere* (*jute leaf*), *dodo* (*amaranth*), *spinach*, *dhania* (*coriander*), watermelon, and pumpkin, many of which were entirely new to me before this experience,” she discloses happily.

She further explains that the training also covered practical lessons on new farming techniques for vegetable cultivation, proper harvesting, and cooking guidelines. Akamais expresses her joy over the transformative experiences in both group and individual farms supported by the program. These efforts have led to abundant vegetable harvests, enabling her to sell the surplus and use the income to purchase extra food items for her household.

“It’s amazing to witness the transformation brought about by Nawiri in this village. More mothers are now eager to join support groups, our men are putting in effort to grow food and generate income, and our youth are also engaged in life-changing initiatives. Improved food production and increased income are signs of a future marked by collective prosperity,” she concludes.



“As a result of the training I received in the support group, I have become actively engaged in cultivating a variety of vegetables. These include *sukuma wiki* (*kale*), *murere* (*jute leaf*), *dodo* (*amaranth*), *spinach*, *dhania* (*coriander*), watermelon, and pumpkin, many of which were entirely new to me before this experience.” *Narrates Christine.*

Footprints of Resilience: Shoemaker Finds Opportunity to Thrive in the Face of Adversity



“I learnt the art of repairing shoes when I was still in high school. It all started when I began fixing my friends’ worn-out shoes and earning some pocket money. With just a needle and a strong nylon thread, I had started my entrepreneurial journey,” Lordo enthusiastically explains.

In the dry landscapes of Samburu County is a small village called Nachola – a community where members have to be strong and adaptable to survive. There you will meet a 20-year-old man named James Lordo who was unfortunate to carry the weight of an unforgiving past, but now has a promising future.

In his early years, he experienced the devastating loss of his father. His family faced another tragic blow when bandits killed his brother and stole their camels. Amidst severe drought in the community, Lordo’s mother shouldered the responsibility of being the sole provider. Each day, she faced the daunting task of ensuring her children had at least one meal. In such circumstances, Lordo had to seek the means for his own survival.

He recalls that in early 2022, his sister Akale Epur, a recipient of Drought Emergency Response funds, introduced him to Nawiri. Later, a mentor from the Boy group and a fellow villager arranged a meeting to discuss the program’s vision for their village and their role in making it a reality. This inspired them to form the Natukon youth group which comprised 15 members.

Once the group was formed, they started following a weekly routine. Every Friday afternoon, they would meet to receive guidance from their Mentor. The meetings would include discussions on diverse topics such as basic education, health and nutrition, Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH), financial literacy through Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA), life skills, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), women empowerment, and leadership.

The Natukon youth group established a VSLA, where they pooled money monthly for savings and a social fund. The funds were used to start businesses and meet household needs. They were provided with a metal savings box called ‘Sanduku’.

Nawiri is currently supporting 138 active VSLA groups, 90 in Samburu North and 48 in Samburu East Sub-county. As of May 2023, the VSLA groups have collectively saved KES 1,862,469 and established a social fund of over KES 368,000. VSLA groups have effectively borrowed funds, totaling KES 783,529 while maintaining financial stability.

Driven by a desire to establish a business that would support his younger sister’s education, Lordo borrowed KES 2,000 from the group’s savings and started a shoe repair business. “We thank Nawiri for providing these simple savings boxes that hold our collective dreams and aspirations,” Lordo affirms.

He adds, “When I started, I was the only person operating such a unique business venture in Nachola. As a result, my business expanded rapidly, well over my expectations. Within no time, I was able to promptly offset my loan, including the mutually agreed interest rate of 10 percent. Last December, I borrowed another loan to diversify my business.”

He now operates a kiosk offering essential household items like sugar, rice, and beans. Additionally, his shop provides a much sought-after solar-powered phone charging service for a fee.

Nawiri is currently supporting 138 active VSLA groups, 90 in Samburu North and 48 in Samburu East Sub-county. As of May 2023, the VSLA groups have collectively saved KES 1,862,469 and established a social fund of over KES 368,000. VSLA groups have effectively borrowed funds, totaling KES 783,529 while maintaining financial stability.

As the VSLA groups in Samburu County thrive, powered by the unwavering support of USAID Nawiri, a resounding message echoes: when communities are empowered to shape their financial destinies, a legacy of lasting success is born.

Unconditional Cash Transfer: A Lifeline for Remote Villages in Turkana to Combat Malnutrition and Thrive



“USAID Nawiri’s financial assistance has been a lifeline for my family. With their support, we no longer live in constant fear of where our next meal will come from, and for this, I am truly grateful. This support allowed me to start a business, ensuring that the future of my family remains secure even after the UCT ends,” states Lobenyo

The unforgiving midday sun blazes overhead, casting an intense and dazzling glow. Oblivious of this, 35-year-old Lobenyo Nachuda diligently tends to customers at her busy roadside eatery in the heart of Kagitankori shopping center, located in Turkana South Sub-county. With a warm smile, she skillfully takes orders and promptly serves her hungry customers.

Behind that warm smile lies a story of resilience. In reality, she is a mother of four, bearing emotional scars inflicted by the ruthless impact of drought. Simply put, she has survived the sting of malnutrition. In early 2022, Lobenyo was diagnosed with moderate acute malnutrition and was enrolled in the USAID supplementary feeding program at Kagitankori dispensary.

While firmly holding her playful 11-month-old son on her lap, she narrates, “During my pregnancy, I struggled with malnutrition due to the limited access to nutritious food. In my community, we rely mostly on milk, meat, or occasionally maize mixed with beans, as staple food. The situation worsens for those lacking a reliable income or access to arable land. Previously, we relied on our livestock and farms, but the five consecutive drought seasons forced us to abandon our traditional food production activities.”

Besides participating in the feeding program, Lobenyo was also a beneficiary of the USAID Nawiri Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT), which is part of the Drought Emergency Response (DER). She received an initial monthly allowance of KES 5,000 (USD 40) that she spent on food for her family. Additionally, she successfully saved a portion of the subsequent monthly funds received to establish her own eatery.

The UCT has been instrumental in supporting households with pregnant and lactating women, as well as children under 5 years facing severe or moderate acute malnutrition. So far, 5,830 households in Turkana and Samburu Counties have received essential support through transfers, totaling KES 3,452,452.

“USAID Nawiri’s financial assistance has been a lifeline for my family. With their support, we no longer live in constant fear of where our next meal will come from, and for this, I am truly grateful. This support allowed me to start a business, ensuring that the future of my family remains secure even after the UCT ends,” states Lobenyo who is also a member of the Natiring adapted mother-to-mother support group (AMTMSG). This group is thriving owing to the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) activities which are also supported by Nawiri.

The program utilizes approaches, particularly VSLAs, to economically empower vulnerable women and enhance their access to a diverse range of nutritious foods hence enhancing their nutrition resilience. Through the VSLA group, Lobenyo gained valuable skills in saving money and managing her small business. As a result of these experiences, she is firmly convinced that embracing a savings culture and the successful running of her small business hold the key to unlocking her path to success.

The group has also sensitized her on the importance of vegetables in maintaining a healthy diet and how to cultivate them. It has also enhanced her cooking skills.

Reflecting with joy, she says, “It’s truly remarkable how these newfound skills, coupled with the financial support from our group, have significantly enhanced the quality of life for me and my family. I was inspired to start a vegetable garden in my backyard to provide food for my family.



“It’s truly remarkable how these newfound skills, coupled with the financial support from our group, have significantly enhanced the quality of life for me and my family. I was inspired to start a vegetable garden in my backyard to provide food for my family.” Lobenyo Nachuda mentions.

Additionally, I’ve utilized loans from our group’s savings, with a 10% interest rate, to expand my business and cover my children’s school fees.”

Despite the escalating costs of food commodities and her limited record-keeping skills, which pose a significant risk to her business and eats into her profits, Lobenyo maintains a positive outlook. She believes that the ongoing mentoring sessions offered by USAID Nawiri will help her discover viable solutions to her challenges, paving the way for prosperity.

Young Mothers Building Nutrition Resilience Through Venturing in Male Dominated Livestock Business



Veronica Apeiya, a program participant, speaking during one of the field visits outside their Kiosks in Loreng Village in Turkana West Sub-county.

In the Heart of Turkana West, along the Kenya-Uganda border, we meet Veronica Apeiya, a lively and remarkably youthful woman. Despite being only 28 years old, she is the mother of five children. Judging by her youthful looks, it is evident that she was married off at an early age, in accordance with the customs of the Turkana community.

Veronica's outstanding ability to articulate issues on behalf of the Rural Entrepreneurs Access Program for Nutrition (R4N) participants of Loreng village made her stand out. She passionately shared how the R4N business model has not only yielded positive results for her and fellow participants but has also benefited the entire village and its surroundings.

She emotionally shared her family's challenges, such as losing livestock to frequent cattle rustling from neighboring communities living along the Kenya- Uganda border and the impact of a prolonged drought.

Due to this circumstance, her two-year-old child underwent screening and was identified as severely malnourished. As a result, the child was enrolled in the program's

supplementary feeding program. She was also identified as part of women with ultra poor households and was then enlisted in the USAID Nawiri's R4N groups, a poverty graduation initiative targeting to sustainably support communities combat acute malnutrition through diverse livelihood interventions.

She says, "The arrival of Nawiri marked the beginning of a new chapter in my life. Previously, I endured a life filled with despair, compounded by a severe malnutrition crisis in my household due to insufficient food for my family. We experienced significant losses of our family livestock, which served as our sole livelihood. The persistent drought further reduced the remaining livestock, leaving us with almost nothing."

The confident mother enthusiastically shared how the business grant of KES 30,000 they received from USAID Nawiri, along with three other women, profoundly transformed their lives. Operating under the name Ngaroon Business Group, the three mothers, whose children were once severely malnourished, are now actively involved in various business ventures aimed at enhancing their household economics for better nutritional outcomes.

"As a group, we were determined to establish a thriving livestock business despite it being male dominated. We started with only three goats. Our husbands were supportive enough to help us by walking for 40 kms to Kakuma town where they sold our goats, fetching a profit of KES 3000 which they brought us back. They have been a very strong Pillar to us in negotiating for our goats to fetch good prices and providing security."

Furthermore, as part of their business diversification strategy, they initiated a small kiosk specializing in the sale of food commodities. This decision was influenced by their practice of primarily sending livestock to the market once a week. The kiosk served as an additional source of income for the remaining days.

Lucas Lorot, USAID Nawiri, REAP for Nutrition Mentor takes pride in the way her mentees have been so eager to learn and put the skills gained into practice. "My primary responsibility as a mentor has been to coach participants in tailored business skills designed to accommodate their low literacy levels. In addition, I have provided support in record-keeping and facilitated bulk purchases for the R4N participants," says Lucas.

While appreciating the uniqueness of USAID Nawiri, Lucas says, "Being personally involved with USAID Nawiri and particularly supporting R4N participants has been incredibly inspiring. The initiative's focus on reducing malnutrition is commendable. My collaboration with the Community Health Promoters in conducting case management for nutrition resilience has been exceptionally effective. This approach offers a solid foundation for monitoring the children's nutritional progress throughout the intervention."

Apart from enhancing access to diverse foods in the remote Loreng village, the R4N participants always play another key role of cascading health nutrition messages to their customers.



"My primary responsibility as a mentor has been to coach participants in tailored business skills designed to accommodate their low literacy levels. In addition, I have provided support in record-keeping and facilitated bulk purchases for the R4N participants," says Lucas.

"Our shops are also acting as Health and Nutrition information points for the community members. Whenever they come to buy food, we encourage them to diversify their foods by having various food types," narrates Veronica.

She finally says, "My view has completely changed. Looking forward, I see myself as a successful mother who will soon have her well established business by the end of this 18 months graduation business model thanks to the USAID Nawiri's timely and strategic intervention."

Finding Strength in the Face of Adversity: Nkasanae's Story of Hope and Healing



“Without the nutritious Plumpy Nuts provided at the hospital and the monthly financial support I receive from Nawiri, I cannot imagine how Lewani would be now. In the past, I used to provide her with milk, but the prolonged drought has forced our livestock to move deeper into the forest in search of water. Milk became scarce and my child’s health suffered,” *narrates Nkasanae.*

In the drought-stricken landscapes of Samburu County, pastoralist communities face a battle for survival. Women and children bear the brunt of the crisis, as scarce rainfall and decimated livestock leave them vulnerable to malnutrition and possible death. Their lifeline, reliant on livestock with limited vegetable cultivation, hangs by a thread. These communities struggle with an uncertain future while dealing with the urgent need for survival.

Meet Nkasanae Leshekeren, a brave mother from Nkii village in Samburu East. She shares her harrowing tale of last year’s terrifying ordeal, desperately fighting to save her son, Lewani, from the clutches of malnutrition during a prolonged drought.

“Without the nutritious Plumpy Nuts provided at the hospital and the monthly financial support I receive from Nawiri, I cannot imagine how Lewani would be now. In the past, I used to provide her with milk, but the prolonged drought has forced our livestock to move deeper into the forest in search of water. Milk became scarce and my child’s health suffered,” *narrates Nkasanae.*

Fortunately, through the collaborative efforts of USAID Nawiri and the Samburu Department of Health, Nkasanae and Lewani were able to access integrated medical outreach services. Lewani underwent malnutrition screenings, which led to his diagnosis of Severe

Acute Malnutrition (SAM). Without delay, he was enrolled in the Therapeutic Feeding Program (TFP) at the Ndonyo Wasin health facility and received Plumpy Nut, a peanut-based paste for treating severe acute malnutrition.

Nkasanae went through a four-month monitoring period and received education on maternal health and nutrition. She expresses joy in realizing the importance of maintaining a well-balanced diet and understanding the nutritional benefits of the various locally available food options. Along with acquiring new parenting skills, she also learned strategies to prevent malnutrition within her family of five.

In response to the devastating impact of drought on the communities in Samburu County, the Nawiri program has been providing support to affected households through its Drought Emergency (DER) Program. Nkasanae was included in the DER program, where she receives a monthly stipend of KES 7,080 enabling her to provide her household with diverse and nutritious food.

So far, the program has supported 2507 households in Samburu with monthly stipends totaling to KES 23,426,788. Additionally, the program has facilitated the enrollment of 13,615 SFP programs. Thanks to the concerted efforts, Lewani has been discharged from the TFP program, and her Measurement of Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) reading has improved from 11 cm to 13.5 cm, indicating a full recovery.

Nkasanae went through a four-month monitoring period and received education on maternal health and nutrition. She expresses joy in realizing the importance of maintaining a well-balanced diet and understanding the nutritional benefits of the various locally available food options.



7,080

Amount Nkasanae receives as a monthly stipend from the DER program, where she receives a monthly stipend, her to provide her household with diverse and nutritious food.



2,507

Households in Samburu supported with monthly stipends by the program, totaling to KES 23,426,788.



13,615

Number of additional SFP programs, enrolled of through the program.



How Huduma Mashinani expo is taking services closer to Baragoi



"The big challenge that we have realised is that people are not aware of their needs in terms of service delivery, and people are not informed as per their needs, and that is the reason we have brought the services to the people and the impact of the expo will be realised later," she said.

David Rotich, another official in charge of livelihood and marketing, said research revealed that the people in the area were not aware of their need for financial services like banking NHIF, KRA, and how to acquire loans. Samburu North MP Eli Letipila admitted that the people in the area were facing a unique situation in terms of accessing government services.

"Most of us are pastoralists and have been facing serious challenges in terms of access to government services. From the terrain to the high cost of transportation, it has been extremely difficult to access government services," Letipila said.

According to Huduma Centre Manager Henry

Samburu North MP Eli Letipila (in a pink t-shirt) at one of the tents during the Huduma Mashinani expo at Baragoi, Samburu County, last Saturday. [Michael Saitoti, Standard]

County Government, USAID Nawiri deliver fishing gears to Lomekwi Fishermen



The Department of Fisheries and USAID Nawiri, have He commended the community for their effort in eradicating distributed high-quality fishing gears and equipment to acute malnutrition

THE LANCET

Kenya Introduces Huge School Meals Programme



Almost 800 000 people face acute food insecurity—ie, phase 4 of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) used by the UN, which is just below phase 5 (famine) on the scale.

On March 1, 2023, the African Union marked the 8th African Day of School Feeding. Home-grown school feeding reaches 66 million children in 54 African countries, with 84% of the home-grown programmes funded by domestic budgets, according to the World Food Programme (WFP). However, the proportion of school-aged children receiving school meals in Africa, both home-grown and sourced elsewhere, fell slightly to 31% in 2022, from 33% in 2020, reported the WFP.

The WFP says that school meals help to fight hunger, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, anaemia, and obesity. School meals also help to build local resilience and, when food is grown sustainably, they

COUNTY GOVERNMENT RECEIVES DONATION FROM USAID NAWIRI TO STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

Universal health coverage ensures everyone can access quality health services they need without financial burden, promoting equitable healthcare access.

The County Department of Health and Sanitation has received a donation of weighing scales and height and length boards from USAID Nawiri to strengthen primary healthcare services at the community level.

and governor's health agendas," said Peter Lomorukai, County Chief Officer for Preventative and Promotive.

He further added that the achievement of the universal healthcare (UHC) agenda was dependent on the recently launched primary care networks; the linking of facilities to facilitate referrals starting at the community to the specialised hubs/hospitals.

length boards would complement the MUAC tape in growth and monitoring promotion (GMP).

She stated that studies had shown that using the tape only means that 46% of malnourished children are not identified.

Turkana County Field and Director for USAID Nawiri, Gabriel Ekuwam, said that the organisation was committed to working with the county



Nawiri implemented a structured and adaptable process known as CIAAP, an approach critical for site selection, maximizing resource utilization, and joint participant targeting and enrollment. In Year 4, the CIAAP process was effectively carried out in all 352 targeted villages, with 88 in Samburu and 264 in Turkana. The photo shows an ongoing joint targeting session at Kokuro village in Turkana North.



USAID **Nawiri**
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