



# INYUAT E MAA PROFILE

## 2022



## BACKGROUND

This document presents the historical journey of Inyuat e Maa Organization (MAA) since its inception in 1991. It is a journey that explains briefly where MAA as an organization came from up to the present moment. Apart from highlighting some key strides that have been gained, the story also speaks of some of the major challenges and potholes that befallen this organization. MAA operations are premised on four essential factors that are deemed necessary in enlightening our decision towards the desired transformation:

- Changing people's lives for the better
- Strengthening community voices
- Reinforcing our internal effectiveness
- Engaging partnerships

### *Vision*

MAA envisages a society that enjoys sustainable livelihoods through active participation in the ownership, protection, use and management of environment and natural resources; and in shaping local, national, regional and international conservation and development priorities.

### *Mission*

MAA is dedicated to building a just, more empowered and more sustainable community using knowledge, commitment and action in partnership with others.



## OUR HISTORY

### **Emergence of Pastoralist NGOs in Tanzania**

The beginning of 1990 saw for the first time, the emergence of a number of Maasai pastoralist NGOs in Tanzania. The number grew exponentially, from ten registered NGOs by 1994 to more than one hundred such organizations in 2000. During the 1990s, most, like Inyuat e Maa and KIPOC, were organized around diverse claims of a common “indigenous” identity. Given their long history of grievances against the Tanzanian state, framing their demands in terms of their rights as indigenous people provided a unique opportunity to challenge disparaging stereotypes, forge a collective identity, and mobilize disparate and often dispirited groups. They gained greater visibility for their groups, increased international legitimacy for their claims, and, inevitably, improved donor support. In fact, after a while, many of these organizations demonstrated an extraordinary ability to attract substantial funds from bilateral and private international donors. Their evident success in mobilizing donor funding (visible in the new vehicles, jobs, and national and international travel) encouraged the formation of even more NGOs in the turn of this century. We must also underscore the fact that some of the recently formed NGOs may not necessarily have evidence of local support to justify their legitimacy. Nonetheless, one must appreciate a whole range of issues and the current youth enthusiasm in pastoralist NGO sector and its positive contribution to the local, national and international development agenda.

## **The inception and launching of MAA**

The history of MAA can be traced back to 1991 when it was conceived in a large Maasai conference that took place in Arusha. This conference brought together about 600 people, largely men, among whom were traditional leaders and learned Maasai elites from various traditional segments of both Kenya and Tanzania. The main purpose of this conference was to revitalize the culture and values of the Maasai society across the East African region, and register their cause for unity and integrity. One of the key results of this conference was the establishment and formal registration of Inyuat e Maa as a community-based organization (CBO) in 1993 before it transformed later into its current status as NGO. As such, the organization was set up to operate in four districts of Arusha region, namely, Simanjiro, Monduli, Kiteto, and Ngorongoro. These districts were in turn partitioned into zones: Simanjiro South, Simanjiro Plains, Sepeko, Manyara, Lorkisalie, and Longido. The CBO developed its structures with the aim to address socio-economic, cultural and environmental challenges that face pastoralists in the above constituencies. The CBO became very popular among the Maasai communities both in Tanzania and Kenya due to the fact that it was the first indigenous organization, operated by indigenous people to address real issues that the target communities were facing, particularly in Tanzania. It raised high the expectations of the community that by then was facing serious challenges in terms of land alienation, poverty, and cultural erosion.

## **Major regression**

Just a few years (1994-1997) after its formal registration as CBO, the organization experienced major difficulties that almost led to its immediate collapse. These problems included among others, issues related to lack of financial resources, weak leadership, antagonistic relationship with government, and poor contacts with the grassroots. Thus, just three years shortly after its inception was an era of serious uncertainty. This situation called for immediate relook, redesigning and restructuring of MAA in order to secure it from the then looming demise.

## **Restructuring and redesigning**

In 1998 MAA underwent a major change and redesigning in terms of its functioning and structure. Thanks to the financial and technical support by the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and USAID, MAA grew to become one of the strongest and vocal pastoralist institutions in northern Tanzania rangelands. This was made possible following a major restructuring process that led to the conversion of MAA into an organization that is people-centered, relates positively with the government, and accountable for resources put under its control. It therefore reconstituted its Vision, Mission Statement, and Main Objectives. Among the principal objectives that were developed was: to promote pastoralism as a suitable and sustainable economic option compatible with conservation of wildlife and environment. More focus was put on enhancing collective and sustainable community participation in planning, managing and reaping from the natural resources. Thus the rationale for the reformation of the new MAA was to weave a socioeconomic regime among the pastoralists that is in harmony with their ecology. This endeavor, which is still alive today, can be grasped from the way MAA continues to conceptualize its

Mission, Vision and Objectives today in both our theory of change and the long term development strategy (Vision 2040).

Ever since the 1998 restructuring and the subsequent re-registration as national NGO, MAA has been able to consolidate a highly participatory, transparent and accountable governance and oversight structure. This, in a nutshell, is characterized by a General assembly of members (oversees the Board); a Board of Directors (policy and management oversight); and the Management Team under the Executive Director, who is in charge of the day to day running of MAA operations. For continuous performance, MAA introduced various mechanisms to ensure that the above structures remain intact and in constant support to each other. An example of these mechanisms is the introduction of the current annual Board retreats in 2003 to date. A key feature in the administrative structure is the attempt to get Board members in frequent retreats for purposes of brain-storming and reflecting on the state of the organization. This is part of a strategy to ensure that the organization functions as an organized entity, as is also the purpose of other administrative structures put in place that constitute it.

### **Significant Landmarks**

- *Internal Capacity Enhancement*

Between 2003 and 2005 MAA in partnership with AWF and PACT-Tanzania, launched a series of Organizational Capacity Assessments (OCA) for the purpose of strengthening the organization. This was a rigorous 3-year Organizational Development initiative through USAID assistance to strengthen further MAA in terms of internal and external effectiveness. On the whole, these assessments empowered MAA to put in place a management regime that endeavors to link together its constituents, office bearers and its benefactors both in terms of its mission and activities. Indeed, in a series of follow-up studies of Civil Society Organizations and Community-based Organizations done by PACT-TAPP Tanzania in 2010, MAA rating in terms of governance came up well above the national average. (Ref. *PACT Tanzania, TAPP Partners OCA Baseline Report: A Foundation for Growth, 2010.*)

It is, again, significant to make reference to the above cited study by PACT Tanzania where the issues of advocacy and service delivery were interrogated with respect to several Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and CBOs. MAA's advocacy capacity and practice was rated above the national average. More important here is that the study rated MAA's service delivery capacity at 3.9 against the national average of 2.59. Such a combination of advocacy and service delivery partly informs the high sustainability record that MAA commands, especially where sustainability is conceived as stakeholder commitment. In the same study, MAA's sustainability score was 3.3, against a national average of 2.49. Thus even compared to other actors in the national scene, it can, therefore, be seen that the indicators that signal an organization's capability to act as a coherent whole are uppermost in MAA, much more than with its contemporaries. This is largely a consequence of the ability of MAA to weave together a regime of problem analysis and priority setting that is in tune with the aspirations of its grassroots constituency. The results of all these have been manifested in a series of grant partnerships MAA has had with international organizations such as the UNDP, African Wildlife Foundation, World Vision, PAMS

Foundation, and others on the one hand; and local partners such as local councils, civil societies organizations, private companies, individual volunteers, traditional leaders and other stakeholders.

- *Establishment of the Center for Drylands Environment and Development*

After having worked with local communities for more than two decades on environment and development issues, MAA has recently established a center for environment and development. This has come about as a result of the realization of a knowledge gap among local communities regarding synergy between environment and development. The current deterioration of dryland environment could largely be attributed to human behavior and actions, which can be addressed by enhancing knowledge and stewardship behavior among local communities. As such MAA came with an innovative idea to establish a center that in a way could address this challenge.

The objectives of this center are: to create space and opportunity for local communities to engage and learn from each other; to build a pro-activeness culture of stewardship and leadership in addressing environmental challenges; to collect, process and disseminate information regarding best practices in sustainable environmental management; to nurture the skills of emerging leaders particularly among women, youth and indigenous communities in order to enhance collective action and movement building around climate justice and environmental health; nurture leadership that drives and replicates the rationalization, integration, and development of indigenous knowledge and mainstream women empowerment in environmental management; and finally, nurture partnerships, and collaborative mechanisms that maximize the effectiveness of local interventions. Given the required resources (finances, volunteers and equipment), this center will contribute significantly to the empowerment of the dryland communities in addressing socio-economic, institutional and environmental challenges.

- *Enhanced Partnerships (Traditional Institutions, Local Communities, Government, local and international NGOs and Donors)*

Given that its re-launching happened 20 years ago, it can thus be seen how the organization has been able to reinvent itself, and with an impact rare with NGOs of its kind. It has been an impact which, even established organizations could not afford to ignore. They have, like the local communities and the district councils, read potent signals of a credible entity from MAA's rapport with local communities. Key to these strides is the fact that MAA has always endeavored to ensure that it can handle responsibilities to the satisfaction of its various constituencies and partners. This question can be looked at from two angles. The first is in terms of those responsibilities the organization is charged with by its constituents, that of harnessing external assistance to stimulate community transformation in tandem with the priorities and resources that the communities have. The second one has to do with the responsibility over resources put at its disposal by donors, for utilization in furtherance of the communities' development endeavors. More often than not, this responsibility revolves around donor funds. To this extent, MAA's first task was to realize and concede its limitation in financial expertise and consequently developed its capacity for handling funds, particularly external financial matters. Various mechanisms have been developed in this respect. Over the years this includes among others, financial management and reporting systems and guidelines for overseeing program funds from past and present project partners such as AWF and the

USAID's Partnership Options for Resource-use Innovations (PORI) and SCALE projects, PACT-TAPP, Stitching Porticus, UNDP, Sigrid Rausing Trust, World Vision Tanzania, UPENDO Foundation, Oak Foundation, Touchstone Trust, and PAMS Foundation, to mention just a few. In this way, MAA keeps both its external and internal donors and partners equally apprised of the progress of relevant projects.

- *Enhanced community commitment to environmental stewardship*

While on the whole the material consequences of MAA's journey over the years in the pastoralist drylands of northern Tanzania cannot be refuted, it can be submitted that perhaps the critical and most enduring legacy that the activities of MAA have engendered since its inception to date, is the innovative sense of self-worth that has come to grip these communities. They now have acquired a feel of their ability to control the tide of events around them. This has always been a key desire of MAA. Raising awareness for self-actualization among the general public is difficult. Pastoralists in the dryland always understand well about responding to their needs. They also like to hear about efforts by government and NGOs to help them develop even further. But it is more difficult to generate their commitment and action for their lasting enthusiasm around issues and challenges of modern development. MAA has contributed much to creating this lasting enthusiasm of dryland communities for environmental stewardship.

## **GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS**

MAA specific target is to continue to dispense our operations in northern Tanzania drylands in three districts of Monduli, Longido and Arumeru (Arusha region); Simanjiro and Kiteto (Manyara region); and expand in the future to cover Siha and Same (Kilimanjaro region); and three East-Coast districts where marginalized pastoralists and agro-pastoralists live. We will continue to assess the relevance of our entry points in this geographical landscape and to learn more about the challenges, possible solutions and potential partners. Special attention will continue to be paid to the presence of effective local organizations to partner with, the potential for co-funding and the ability to leverage more financing for scaling-up of support. With partners, MAA will work on the particular challenges women, youth and marginalized indigenous peoples (IPs) face and build on their unique assets and perspectives.

## **OUR PROGRAMS**

### ***Governance and empowered voices***

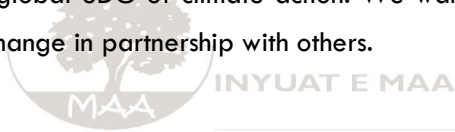
Governance and accountability is the basis for the success of any transformative development of any society. MAA holds that addressing governance issues is pertinent to the success of global Sustainable Development Goals. MAA governance program cuts across all global SDGs, with particular emphasis on our six focal SDGs of ending poverty; ending hunger; water and sanitation; climate change; life on land; and enhancing partnership. With partners, we want to ensure that governance systems and structures allow people to hold their leaders accountable to them, while at the same time empowering their voices and vigilance (particularly voices of marginalized segments such as pastoralist communities and their traditional institutions living in poverty and exclusion, women, elderly and youth).

### ***Community livelihood investments***

With partners, we will continue to create evidence, develop approaches and influence policy for increased local control over natural resources and investments in sustainable livelihoods, particularly in leveraging resources to end poverty, managing water and ensuring food security. This way we will be able to engage with and address the global agenda on sustainable development, particularly our 5 focal SDGs of ending poverty; ending hunger and achieving food security; accessing and managing water and sanitation; addressing climate change; and strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development.

### ***Climate Action***

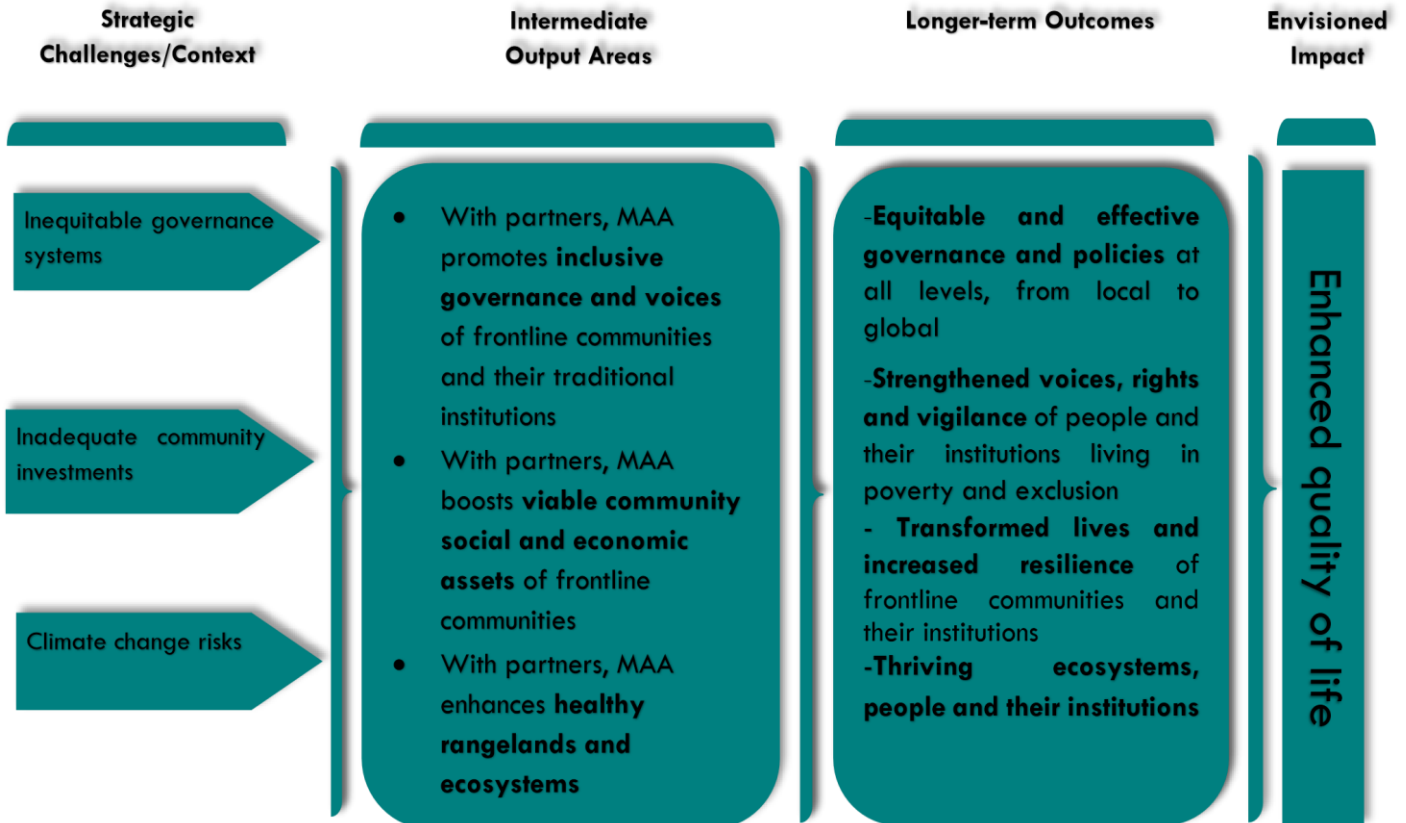
MAA envisions a world where people most affected by climate change enjoy a right to a clean, healthy and safe environment. With partners, we will continue to invest in frontline communities so that they can manage shocks, rebound and continue on progressive pathway to sustainable development. We are focused on improving the futures of these communities whose livelihoods are under serious threat from climate change and the over-exploitation of their natural resources. Entrenched in social, economic and environmental justice, MAA climate change program will prioritize contributions and demands of women, youth and marginalized Indigenous Peoples. It will help them focus and advance their adaptation and resilience mechanisms in ways that support bottom-up community-led approaches. This is the reason why MAA focuses on the thirteenth global SDG of climate action. We want to do so by strengthening the means for addressing climate change in partnership with others.



### ***MAA Institution strengthening***

With partners, MAA will consolidate its internal capacity for the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of its deliverables. By enhancing its capacity to perform, MAA, in collaboration with other institutions, will be able to acquire the means of implementing its objectives and contribute positively to building partnership for sustainable development as stipulated in the final global sustainable development goal (SDG 17). Revitalizing partnership calls for concerted effort of strong and committed institutions at all levels. This will only be possible if such institutions are able to work together to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources. As we take forward the work of the programs outlined in the previous sections, we will look for connections, synergies and lessons that enable us to enrich MAA and its partnerships and deliver greater impact. This intent is well summarized below:

## OUR THEORY OF CHANGE



MAA believes that through capacity enhancement, community investments, promotion of practical and sustainable systems, promotion of strong traditional institutions and climate services, local communities will become more resilient and better able to address livelihood and environmental challenges. Following this belief by MAA to grow and work towards changing peoples' lives and their environment for the better, we now want to make it clear about this desire in our theory of change. MAA "Sustainable Development" hypothesis in this regard is that: *"IF we empower marginalized communities to hold the government accountable and responsive to their demands, and IF we empower them to manage their socio-economic and environmental resources sustainably, THEN they will be able to access their entitlements and build their resilience"*



## CHALLENGES

- *Donor Influence*

Although MAA constituency selected the current geographical-focus and working areas, external forces, especially donor priorities and objectives, have had significant influence in what is being implemented so far. Consequently, there have been apparent and uncoordinated activities that have not directly linked to the overall strategic objectives of MAA. In some instances, plans and budgets have been made to suit the demands of respective funders. Some plans have been made according to available resources from donors and not according to the needs of the communities.

- *Financial limitations*

MAA has also been heavily dependent on short-term grants from very limited and bureaucratic donors, with no access to long-term strategic and core support. This has made it difficult to obtain sustained funding to support program needs and for retaining qualified staff to run technical program requirements and maintain sufficient presence in program villages. By 2020 it became obvious that, unlike the dynamism that MAA displays when it comes to its activities and interactions with the communities among whom it works, at the level of financial support, its funding base is still quite thin. This is also evidenced by frequent shortage of competent human resource to run some technical programs due to recurrent lack of sustained funding to retain qualified staff. Thus, there is a clear need for diversification so far. Of course, this challenge is not specific to MAA organization only, if one reflects on the current challenges involved in attracting donor funding for Non-Governmental Organizations in Tanzania (though this ought not to be the case since these are players in close contact with grass-root reality). However, if MAA were to succeed in its mission, it has to have sustainable and strategic partnerships and funding to support both its core needs and programs.

## CONCLUSION

Having walked through the 25-years' journey of growth and difficulties, it is still obvious that the dryland communities in this region face more complex challenges that in a way call for more support from NGOs like MAA. Key to these challenges are; weak governance in the management of natural resources in pastoralist community; little involvement of traditional institutions in addressing development problems facing community; inadequate community-based investments that inhibit access to socio-economic development opportunities for pastoralists; and deleterious effects of climate change that continue to make the livelihoods of dryland communities and their environment more vulnerable and highly fragile.

All these put together, are the main reasons as to why MAA organization wants to strengthen its work with dryland communities and their environment. We strongly believe that through capacity enhancement, community investments, promotion of practical and sustainable systems, promotion of strong traditional institutions and climate services, local communities can become more resilient and better able to address these challenges. Following this belief to grow and work towards changing peoples' lives and their environment for the better, MAA has made it clear about this desire in our theory of change above.

For MAA to be able to help make this change happen, two issues need to be addressed; on the one hand, the need to continue to reinforce the internal capacity of MAA as an institution. This should be viewed in terms of its governance, leadership and management effectiveness. On the other hand, the need to locate, obtain and expand the necessary partnership base and financial resources to successfully leverage support for our theory of change. It is in this light that MAA continues to seek long term partnerships and strategic funding to walk us towards this desired change.

