

IMPACT KENYA KIPOK FUND

Supporting Pastoralist and other Marginalized
Indigenous Communities secure a Sustainable Future



IMPACT

Indigenous Movement for Peace Advancement
and Conflict Transformation



Kipok, a profound Maasai word meaning “we shall thrive and flourish”, embodies a vision of hope, renewal, and community self-determination. It reflects a belief that communities already possess the knowledge, relationships, and leadership needed to shape their futures when provided with trusted and flexible support.

The Indigenous worldview is grounded in a system where resources follow relationships, decisions are held collectively, and land, culture, and wellbeing are inseparable. Today, climate change, prolonged drought, displacement, and exclusion from mainstream finance systems are pushing pastoralist and Indigenous communities to the edge. The Kipok Fund exists to meet these challenges; not by imposing new systems but by restoring and resourcing what has always existed within Indigenous communities.

Kipok increasingly plays a fulcrum role by connecting:



Donor-advised funds
such as Reversing
the flow projects



Unrestricted
funds



Special thematic funds
focused on women,
youth, disability
inclusion, livelihoods,
resilience,
territorial governance,
culture, and collective
wellbeing



Community sharing
driven by grassroots
fundraising, including
VSLAs, harambees,
collective sharing, and
group-led donations

“Kipok does not move money to projects. It returns resources directly to Indigenous communities to secure their lands, livelihoods, and cultural heritage.”

Within IMPACT's broader vision, the Kipok Fund represents an innovative internal mechanism for scaling what works, channelling resources directly to communities through trusted, relational pathways rather than conventional project pipelines. It is a model that strengthens IMPACT's core work by deepening accountability to communities and demonstrating that Indigenous-led grantmaking is both effective and replicable at scale.

The Kipok Fund is now ready to scale across the wider region, building on its proven Indigenous-led, community-centered grantmaking approach in Northern Kenya. To ground the next steps, this brief draws on a series of listening sessions with traditional knowledge holders and communities in Ethiopia, Somaliland, DRC, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya.



Listening becomes the first act of accountability. It is through this process that concepts like Emurua (landscape), Enkoishon (wellbeing), and Elelero (Youth) move beyond language and become lived realities shaping how communities define wellbeing.

Malih Ole Kaunga, Executive Director, IMPACT Kenya

01 | **PURPOSE** WHY KIPOK EXISTS

The Kipok Fund, launched in Northern Kenya in 2020 under IMPACT Kenya, demonstrates what happens when communities are genuinely trusted with resources and decision-making power. With over USD 2 million disbursed to 48 community groups, Kipok's approach has shown that complementarity, trust-building and relational accountability are effective in strengthening Indigenous communities.

The fund was built from a simple but radical insight: communities are not beneficiaries waiting for support. They are custodians of knowledge, culture, land and future generations.

Conventional funding systems too often require formal registration, written proposals in foreign languages, institutional bank accounts, and rigid reporting. These systems often exclude the very people who need resources most. The Kipok Fund was created to bridge this gap.

Foundational Principles of KIPOK



Guided by the foundational principles of the Four Rs, Kipok seeks to strengthen communities in ways that are holistic, culturally grounded, and community-defined:

- **RESTORE** dignity and hope by ensuring access to opportunities.
- **REBUILD** traditional livelihoods and economies.
- **RESOURCE** in financing, skills, and mentorship for innovation.
- **RESILIENCE** strengthening by helping communities assess vulnerabilities and develop nature-based enterprises.

What Kipok Funds

01	Protection and restoration of land, water and grazing territories
02	Climate resilience and sustainable pastoralist livelihoods
03	Women's and youth leadership within Indigenous governance
04	Cultural ceremonies, traditional knowledge and intergenerational learning
05	Community-owned savings groups, cooperatives and healing spaces
06	Indigenous-led solutions for food systems, agroecology and territorial governance

Communities in Northern Kenya have used Kipok's support to restore degraded rangelands, strengthen rotational grazing systems, expand sustainable beekeeping, protect sacred landscapes, cultivate agroecological gardens and build enterprises that sustain livelihoods while safeguarding ecosystems. Expanding the Kipok Fund across the region to Ethiopia, Somaliland, DRC, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya will:



Strengthen cross-border Indigenous solidarity, knowledge exchange, and community-led learning across pastoralist and marginalized communities facing shared environmental, cultural, and livelihood challenges.



Increase access to flexible and direct financing for grassroots Indigenous and pastoralist communities.



Promote Indigenous-led solutions for food sovereignty, resilience, mobility, and territorial governance.

The Broader Shift Kipok Is Part Of

Inclusion is not about representation, it is about having a voice and belonging.

- Elders guide wisdom
- Women shape decisions and resource use
- Youth bring ideas and continuity
- Marginalized households are seen and supported



The true power of Kipok will not only be in the resources it mobilizes, but in how those resources are channelled to communities.

Elizabeth Silakan, Director of Operations, IMPACT Kenya

The Kipok flow is a departure from conventional grantmaking. Every step is designed to keep decision-making closest to the people most affected.



What Makes This Different

- Decisions are reached through consensus and harmony.
- Communities must first be consulted and allowed to define their own needs.
- Communities hold each other accountable through shared oversight.
- Field accompaniments strengthen trust and accountability.
- Groups report collectively through local language dialogue and reflection.

Kipok recognizes knowledge shared through voice notes, storytelling, oral presentations, and local-language conversations as fully legitimate -removing barriers that have long silenced Indigenous and grassroots communities from accessing philanthropic support. Rather than monitoring communities from above, Kipok advisors walk alongside them through visits, dialogue, and collective reflection. Accountability is relational, not extractive.

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**Cultivating Change from the Roots:
Indigenous-Led, Locally Driven**



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