

# Lewa News

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEWA WILDLIFE CONSERVANCY



## A SONG FOR DEVELOPMENT

by Elodie Sampere | Head of Conservation Marketing

**A**round the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, there are many lives that have been positively affected by its community programme. It might be a child that has been able to go to school, thanks to Lewa's bursary programme. It might be a woman that has started her own business, thanks to the Lewa Micro-Credit programme. It might also be a village that now has water or livestock that is able to graze during a time of drought. The stories are numerous and we are proud of each and every single one of them.

So recently, when Isaac Munene, a 23-year old member of the Matunda community – one of Lewa's close neighbours – composed a song about Lewa, we thought it was a story worth telling. The song is in Kimeru – Isaac's local language – and is titled *Maendeleo Lewa* (Development at Lewa). It is the fifth track in his album, *MituguyaAmeru* (The culture of the Ameru), and it talks about the great work that Lewa is doing to promote social change in surrounding communities.

*(continued on page 9)*



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*A Catalyst for  
Conservation*



# from the Chief Executive Officer

## PARTNERSHIPS BASED ON CONSERVATION CONCEPTS KEY TO SUCCESSFUL WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

by Mike Watson | Chief Executive Officer



across the greater Lewa landscape. While this community work is a vital component of our mission, we have not lost focus on the fact that we are a conservation organization, charged with 'acting as a catalyst for conservation' within the larger Lewa area.

This greater, contiguous landscape vision recognizes the fact that long-term, sustained success cannot be achieved if insular, introspective 'islands of conservation' are established. Large mammal migratory routes in this area serve as a clear indication that landscape level, holistic, partnership based conservation concepts will be the key to success. Lewa Wildlife Conservancy is the fulcrum upon which this strategy is founded in our area of influence,

The challenges remain many and varied with headline hijacking focus coming from the continent wide pressure on rhino and elephant. These, and the plethora of other issues linked to increasing population pressure, natural resource shortages and use thereof, land tenure and weak institutional capacity in some of the adjoining landscapes, raise the specter of significant challenges.

These challenges notwithstanding, conservation opportunity is very much present within the greater Lewa area and along with our partners we are in a much better position to deal with the issues at hand. Community conservancies directly adjoining Lewa's northern boundary are taking the battle to the poachers; and communities are increasingly aware of and keen to address the water management and other natural resource issues. All are committed to building institutional strength, sustainable capacity and ensuring the perpetuation of wildlife as an asset in northern Kenya.

**A** year into my tenure as Lewa's Chief Executive Officer, the enthusiasm and commitment our partners continue to show towards conservation efforts is humbling, to say the least. Since my arrival in 1996, I never cease to be amazed by the enduring support Lewa receives from its supporters in the quest to protect and nurture endangered species in northern Kenya. This year is no different, as we continue to form new partnerships, while strengthening and reinforcing the existing ones.

This invaluable support has enabled ongoing success in education, healthcare, enterprise and water infrastructure development programmes. These and other activities are providing massive value to communities living contiguous with our boundaries, and are set in the context of a strategy for generating conservation leverage and opportunity

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Watson'.

Mike Watson



## LEWA SECURITY TEAM WINS THE FIRST *MARCH AND SHOOT* COMPETITION

by Wanjiku Kinuthia | Marketing and Communications Officer

On Saturday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy Security Team won the first annual *March and Shoot* competition held on the Ol Pejeta Conservancy, where five teams competed to test their fitness, field skills and weapons proficiency. The Lewa team scored 235 points, while Ol Jogi and Ol Pejeta scored 120 and 95 points respectively. Lewa's Joseph Kathurima also won the individual shooting competition. This was a proud and remarkable day for the Security Team and Lewa as a whole.

Part of this success can be attributed to the intensive six-week training the Lewa Security Team underwent last year, which included proper weapon handling, fitness training, first-aid, and map reading. As was proved at this first *March and Shoot* competition, Lewa's 30 Kenya Police Reservists (KPR) / armed rangers benefited enormously from this instruction.

The *March and Shoot* competition, which will now become an annual event, saw five teams participate this year – Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Borana Conservancy, Northern Rangelands Trust and Ol

Jogi. The challenge was to complete a 16 kilometer (10 mile) route with full equipment, webbing and rifle. The race consisted of a 13 kilometer run, a 3 kilometer log run and first aid administration at the finish of the route where the teams underwent a live fire ambush. Lewa emerged the overall winner covering the 16 kilometer distance in 1h and 58 minutes against the set time of 2 hours.

Teams were scored on attendance, kit inspection, safety weapon handling, medical skills and individual shooting with the maximum score possible being 300. Any mistake made cost each team a 10 points deduction. Any man who did not finish the run cost his team a 50 points deduction. In the shooting competition, each shot missed cost a 10 points deduction. Finally, if a team completed the race within the two-hour limit, they earned a bonus of 100 points. The Lewa team was the only one that managed to finish the race within the two hours, hence their comprehensive victory.

The next *March and Shoot* will be held 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2012 on the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy.



*The Lewa security team prove their worth during the 3 km log race. The March and Shoot competition tested the participating teams' fitness, field skills and weapons proficiency*



# Community Development

## EXPANDING CONSERVATION, EXPANDING DEVELOPMENT

by John Kinoti and Purity Mwenda | The Community Development Team

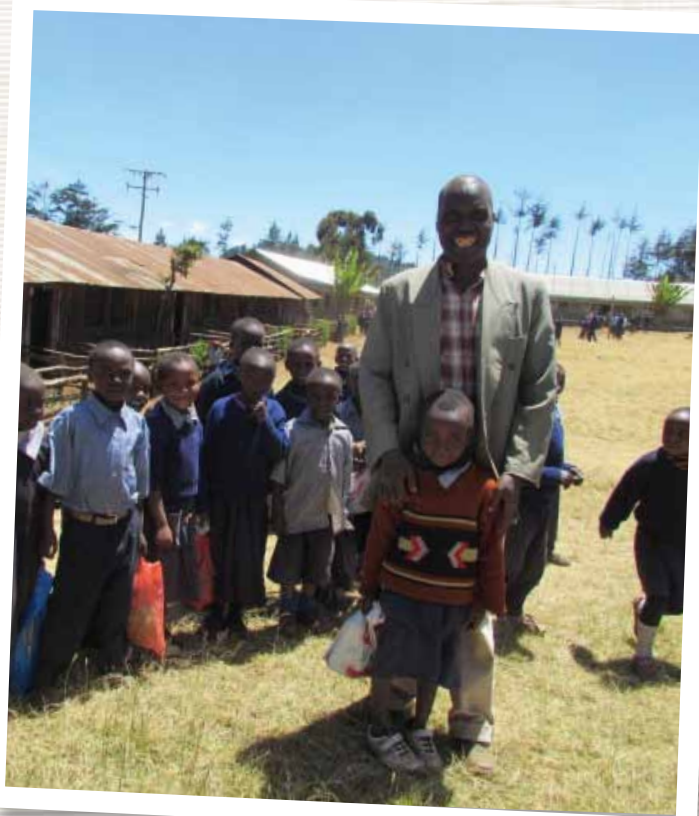
**T**he Ntirimiti community is adjacent to the successfully established wildlife corridor that connects Lewa with the Mount Kenya forest ecosystem. The community is in Buuri district of Eastern Province and is comprised of three villages namely Kamiti, Murangine and Ntirimiti. The majority of the people living in Ntirimiti are subsistence farmers owning small parcels of land.

In order to support conservation efforts, it is imperative that a community recognizes and shares in the benefits of conservation. Also, cases of human-wildlife conflict are bound to occur in such an area, necessitating the need for intervention and consultation as part of community mobilization towards successful wildlife management.

With this in mind, Lewa – in partnership with the Kenya Wildlife Service and the Mount Kenya Trust – carried out a survey to establish the community's development needs.

The survey specifically investigated how to reduce instances of human-wildlife conflicts and stimulate conservation awareness, commitment and practices in the community. Visible results of the knowledge gained from this study are already in place in the form of a new, more effective 7km elephant short-fence and the initiation of support to the building of a Medical Clinic in Ntirimiti, via kind support from donors to Lewa UK. Additionally, there are now plans to re-establish a locally run community forest association (CFA) that will provide a platform for a conservation and development partnership within the Ntirimiti area and its environs.

Ntirimiti is a proud example of another successful, ongoing community development project undertaken by Lewa, where conservation and development go hand in hand.



*A teacher and student from Murangine Primary School during the community needs survey*



*The upgraded, more effective 7 km elephant short fence*



## MENTORING TO SUCCESS

by Faith Riunga | Education Programme Manager



*Boniface Koome, a beneficiary of the mentorship programme smiles wide and proud*

**E**lated! This must be what Boniface Koome along with his sponsors Kathy and Peter Linneman felt when they learned about his stellar performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary education. He had attained an aggregate score of A, certainly no small feat, considering his underprivileged background.

Boniface is a beneficiary of the youth mentorship project which was conceptualized and is fuelled by the Lewa Education Programme (LEP). The young people growing up in Lewa's surrounding communities face countless economic and social challenges, but thanks to the LEP Mentorship programme these students have an opportunity to be guided by conservationists, medics, business entrepreneurs and other successful professionals.

As a result, there is an improvement in academic performance, the desired resilience to cope with challenges and other major changes in their lives. Youth mentoring provides a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer advice, empathy and encouragement.

Nicholas Kaimenyi, sponsored by Susan Lyall and another beneficiary of the mentorship programme, is also a happy young man. His Kenya Certificate of Secondary education overall score of an A- guarantees him a place at a local university and an opportunity to study architecture,

his dream career.

While these maybe seen as indicators of success, LEP recognizes that not all will be A students but through this mentorship programme and career guidance, we can nurture talent and help in turning these young people into successful individuals, ready to take on the modern world.



*Geoffrey Chege, Lewa's Chief Conservation Officer addresses the students during a mentoring session*



# Wildlife Conservation

## ANIMAL INSTINCTS SAVING ELEPHANTS!

by Geoffrey Chege, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and Festus Ihwagi and Iain Douglas-Hamilton, Save the Elephants

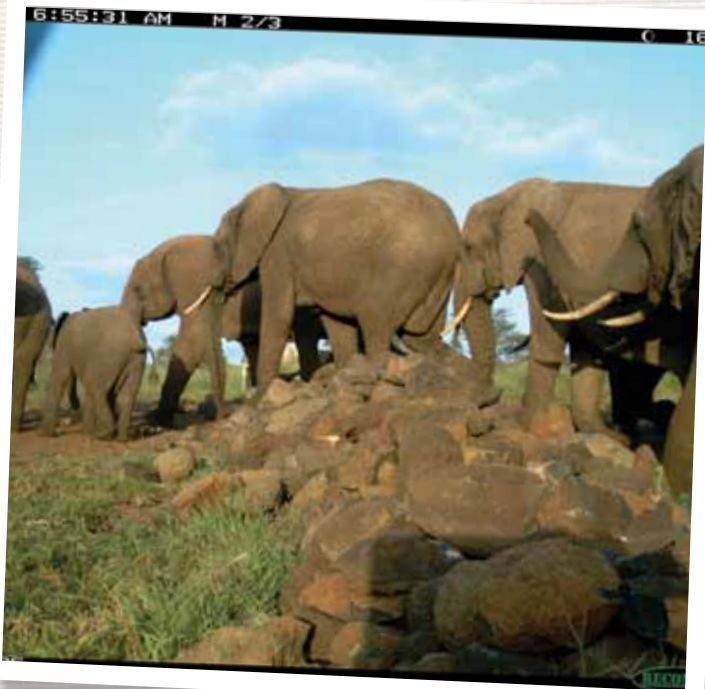
**P**oaching levels in Kenya reached a horrifying all-time high in 2011, only comparable with the 1970s when African Elephants came extremely close to extinction. This current rise has come about at a time when the elephant population was growing healthily as a result of the policies implemented by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and other conservation bodies like Lewa.

With a population of approximately 7,500 elephants, the Laikipia-Samburu ecosystem has lost a significant number of elephants to poachers and according to a MIKE (Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephant) survey carried out in the region, 139 of the 264 carcasses found in the ecosystem in 2011 were confirmed to have been victims of poaching.

In the months of November and December 2011, as a reaction to the extremely wet weather conditions Lewa experienced at the time, many elephants moved to the Samburu plains of Leparua, Lekurruki and Il Ngwesi. Unfortunately, safety was not assured and five elephants were killed in the period between December 2011 and January 2012 by well-organized gangs in Lekurruki and Leparua. KWS and conservancies operating in these areas responded fast, combining both ground and aerial surveillance to stop the killing. The retaliation was hard. In one night, the

poachers ambushed a combined force of Kenya Wildlife Service and Lekurruki security team, leading to the death of one security officer. To further exacerbate the situation, ethnic clashes between communities residing in the area sprouted, leading to further insecurity for both people and wildlife.

Elephants are intelligent animals and populations in the region are quick to respond to insecurity incidences. A few days after this violence started, sensing danger, most of the elephants crossed through the northern elephant gap into Lewa within one hour. The influx coincided with several gunshots reported three kilometres outside Lewa the previous night and confirmed by a fresh carcass of an elephant with missing tusks that same morning. The elephants got lucky, but the above scenario calls for coordinated and concerted efforts by local, national and international level stakeholders to solidify anti-poaching measures and address market-side demand. Lewa shall continue to provide back-up security support to the Northern Rangelands Trust and neighbouring community conservancies as needed, with the hope that long-term solutions that enable the health and protection of species are put in place.



*Pictures captured by our surveillance camera at the northern elephant gap show elephants crossing into Lewa and to safety*



*Happy elephants swimming and playing in Lewa's Dam Kubwa. Safety is of paramount importance for any species to thrive*



## THE FUTURE OF BLACK RHINOS IN KENYA LIES IN THE EXPANSION OF THEIR HABITAT

by Geoffrey Chege | Chief Conservation Officer and Matthew Mutinda | Veterinary Officer



*Mutane, a 23 year old male black rhino enjoys a stroll in his territory*

The indiscriminate poaching of rhinos across their entire range in Africa is posing an undeniable threat to their survival. On top of the threat from poaching, black rhino populations in Kenya are also starting to stall due to lack of suitable and secure habitats for expansion; most of the established and enclosed sanctuaries have attained their ecological carrying capacity. In hopes of addressing these issues, the draft Black Rhino Strategy Plan in Kenya, 2012-2016, has identified protection of rhinos and acquiring of suitable habitat for rhino conservation as two of the main strategic objectives for the next five years. The aim of the Strategy Plan is to contribute towards achieving a metapopulation of 2,000 black rhinos in Kenya.

The threat of poaching has placed enormous financial burden on the state, private and community lands that hold rhinos with Mugie Rhino Sanctuary being one of the areas affected, having lost three rhinos in 2011 to poachers. A series of meetings between the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the management of the sanctuary were held leading to a joint decision to translocate all the 25 black and one white rhino to Ol Jogi Conservancy in Laikipia and to Ruma National Park - the new KWS Rhino Sanctuary on the shores of Lake Victoria. The rhinos' re-introduction into Ruma signified a historic moment as the area last held black rhinos in the 1950s.

The KWS and several other private conservation organizations, including Lewa, have renewed their rhino conservation efforts with plans to reintroduce black rhinos in the Borana Conservancy, immediately to the west of Lewa. This move will be additionally beneficial to Lewa as the black rhino population has reached maximum capacity at just over 70 animals.



*Rhinotek and her calf. With 73 black rhinos, Lewa has already attained its ecological carrying capacity*



# Sustainability

## DONOR PROFILE - SUSAN LYALL

by Ruwaydah Abdul-Rahman | Donor Relations Manager



*With the new face of Kifaru House, Susan maintains a local theme and has used 'Dhow wood' sourced from the Kenyan coast for the poolside furniture including the ceramics surrounding the pool. The pool is fully outfitted with eco-friendly chlorine and sea salt to keep the water clean and solar heating panels to keep the water temperature cool throughout the day in keeping with Lewa's conservation policies and standards*

**S**usan Lyall fell in love with Lewa 13 years ago. Hers is a story of dedication and love for a land and people she shares no kinship or ties with. Susan freely gives because she says: "giving is a small matter; a smile is a gift that has no measure and makes a world of difference, so every little bit counts and leaves an impression".

Susan is particularly passionate about community development and the promotion of literacy. In 2004 she enlisted the help of Faith Riunga, Lewa's Education Programme Manager, to start an adult literacy class. The first class was taught that year and since then the programme has expanded, with a total of 300 candidates registered in 2012. The programme has gone a step further and introduced training workshops to enable graduating students to start successful businesses in sewing, beadwork and other hand arts and crafts. This programme remains one of the best deterrents to illiteracy, poverty and unemployment in the area.

Susan also supports the Education Programme by funding teacher salaries, the feeding programme and the general welfare of kids. In 2011 Susan bought shoes and socks for all the children at Lewa Downs Primary School to help the fight against jiggers. Her latest donation went towards building gutters and catchment points to collect rainwater for the same school.



Susan is also the woman behind Kifaru House. She funded the building of the house and this year is planning to refurbish it in order to enhance the unparalleled 'Kifaru experience'. An impressive wine and champagne section is one of these new and exciting upgrades!

Susan is evidently a very busy woman, but she never slows down and her current aspiration is to construct a Technical Training College in the greater Lewa area. While still in its infancy, the college will aim to provide an opportunity for many who either cannot afford, or do not qualify for higher education.

We at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy would like to thank Susan for her efforts and her continued support of our projects. We acknowledge that the donations Susan has made throughout the years are of a unique nature and we are thankful that she continues to choose us as the recipients of her generosity.



## A SONG FOR DEVELOPMENT

*continued from page 1*

In January this year, Isaac paid a visit to the Lewa headquarters to give a performance of the song. Enthusiastic Lewa staff, humbled by the young man's appreciation of their hard work, gathered outside the Community Development office to listen to the song composed about the organization that they run with tremendous dedication. The song does not only highlight Lewa's pivotal role in conservation and community development, it's also entertaining!

Says Lucy Ndirangu, Lewa's Human Resource Manager, "quite often, well wishers reward us in many various ways. Isaac's gift is special and unique; it's the first of its kind and

we really appreciate the young man's recognition of our hard work."

In his song, Isaac talks about the changes that have taken place in the communities thanks to the Lewa Marathon, the clinics, water projects, agriculture projects, micro-credit loans, new roads, new classrooms for the children and all the books, desks and chairs that have been donated throughout the years. For this, he congratulates the Lewa team. In his chorus, he says that Lewa is leading the way for conservation. He thanks the dedicated staff of Lewa and reiterates that the world needs to follow the Lewa model.



*Isaac Munene strums his guitar as he sings "The song for Lewa" to Lewa staff at the headquarters. Looking on are Lewa's Human Resources Manager, Lucy Ndirangu and the Deputy Security Officer, Edward Ndiritu. Such visible gestures of appreciation always leave the staff members deeply humbled, and encourages continued efforts in wildlife conservation and community development*



## THE BIG SWITCH - FROM GENERATOR TO MAIN GRID POWER

by Ruwaydah Abdul-Rahman | Donor Relations Manager

Since its inception a few decades ago, Lewa has used diesel generators to power its offices and staff houses. While it was the only option, Lewa management recognized that using generators was not good for its carbon footprint, noise levels and pollution.

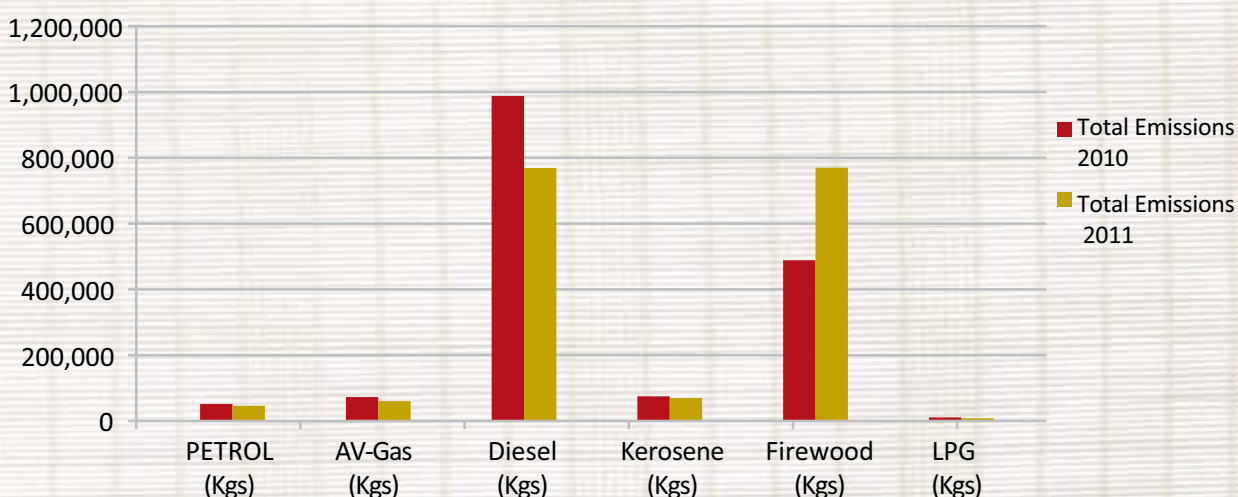
Using mains power has always been an aspiration, but never possible because of the lack of funds. So when the local Member of Parliament, Mr. Silas Muriuki, connected the Lewa Clinic and Manyangalo community to mains power under a rural electrification programme, Lewa grabbed the chance to tap into overhead lines and laid a 1.2 km long cable underground to the headquarters.

Using a generous loan from The Nature Conservancy of US \$125,000, Lewa purchased the underground cable and a 315 KVA transformer needed to channel electricity to its buildings. In addition, distribution boards were purchased and individual meters were set up in each home and office. At the same time, the Junior staff camp near the Lewa Clinic was wired to give all our employees access



to electricity. The return on investment is enormous, with the mains power saving Lewa approximately US \$5,000 per month and making Lewa a "greener" organization.

### Co2 emmissions for 2010 & 2011 per source



*Fuel usage is converted into energy so as to give the correct and specific measure of carbon emission. The graph above depicts the reduction in carbon emission after the switch to mains power, as recorded by Lewa's Logistics Department*



## SUPPORT THE LEWA WILDLIFE CONSERVANCY FROM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD!

**L**ewa's supporters can be found all across the globe. No matter where you are in the world your support can be received and directed to the areas it is needed the most. By contacting any of our affiliate offices abroad, you too can be a part of Lewa's success story and have a lasting impact on the wellbeing of communities, endangered wildlife species protection and poverty alleviation.

There are offices in the UK, Switzerland, the United States and Canada registered as independent charities, from which you can receive a tax deduction on your donation to Lewa. The staff and volunteers within these offices organise various events throughout the year to keep our supporters informed on developments at Lewa and to help raise funds for ongoing projects.

For those not resident in any of the countries mentioned above, donations can be received directly by Lewa in Kenya.

You can contribute in many different ways as listed below, however this is not exhaustive, and a full list of our needs can be obtained by contacting our office directly on [ruwaydah.abdul@lewa.org](mailto:ruwaydah.abdul@lewa.org).



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## How You Can Help Lewa

\$200	Pay a teacher's salary for a month
\$220	Purchase warm clothing for one ranger for security night patrols
\$800	Pays for one year's high school scholarship for a student
\$2,300	<b>URGENT</b> - Purchase uniforms for all the Lewa Health Care Programme staff for one year
\$3,200	Build workshop showers and ablution block for 95 logistic staff members for health & safety measures
\$3,700	Pay for the annual salary of one tracker dog handler, vital for augmenting our security patrols
\$4,500	Pay for the annual salary of a senior radio room operator - Lewa maintains a 24-hour communication network
\$5,500	Support a community agricultural / crop production programme for a year
\$10,000	Cost of conserving a rhino for approximately a year
\$12,425	Purchase seven solar water heaters for staff camps to make Lewa more eco-friendly
\$18,000	For the Upgrade of Lewa's finance systems to Pastel Evolution to streamline and improve the current systems
\$18,000	<b>URGENT</b> - Help construct 1km of predator-proof fencing to reduce human-wildlife conflict on Lewa's eastern boundary
\$26,000	Purchase a year's worth of drugs for the wildlife vet to continue his operations

These are just a few of the items that Lewa needs help with. For additional information on how to support the work of the Conservancy, please contact Ruwaydah Abdulrahman at [ruwaydah.abdul@lewa.org](mailto:ruwaydah.abdul@lewa.org).