Join KWT in spreading COVID kindness

Dear Friends & Supporters of KWT,

As the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, its effects are felt far and wide. In Kenya and in the ecosystems where we operate, we see direct impacts on health and associated economic, social and environmental impacts.

While reported cases of COVID-19 in the key ecosystems where KWT operates are low, its economic and social impacts continue to rise. Communities living in these wildlife areas are grappling with the loss of household income both directly from tourism job losses and the enterprises that form part of the tourism value chain.

Livestock markets have been closed, preventing pastoralists from trading their livestock and getting much-needed cash to buy essential household food and supplies, all against rising living costs. School closures mean that children are missing out important learning time as most households in these communities do not have the resources and capacity for online learning. With limited healthcare services, focus in these areas is primarily on preventative measures including social distancing and hygiene.

Kenya Wildlife Trust firmly believes that for predators and other wildlife to thrive, the communities who co-exist with them need improved access to healthcare and education services, and enhanced livelihood opportunities in order to realize and enjoy direct and tangible benefits from this wildlife.

In Amboseli, we have partnered with The Original Ker & Downey Safaris and Kitirua Conservancy to provide reusable face masks and soap to community members in villages around the conservancy. So far, we have distributed 500 masks and 50kgs of soap to families in Embaragoi and Esiteti villages, with a further 800 masks being provided in the coming weeks.

KITIRUA CONSERVANCY RANGERS coordinated the distribution of masks to villages around the conservancy. The masks were made by Kenya Kanga and soap donated by Pwani Oil Products Ltd.

In the Mara, our Mara Predator Conservation Programme community team will distribute 170 handwashing stations and COVID-19 awareness posters in the Maa language to ranger outposts, health centers and markets across the Mara Ecosystem.

The Lion Recovery Fund has recently supported the recruitment of ten community lion ambassadors who will respond to conflict incidences, warn communities of the approach of lions to settlements and grazing areas, and raise awareness about husbandry techniques needed to minimize conflict. The ambassadors will also talk to communities about COVID-19 prevention and work with the MPCP team to distribute handwashing stations.

CONSERVANCY RANGERS in the Mara are some of the beneficiaries of handwashing kits distributed by the Mara Predator Conservation Programme.

Looking Ahead

Current efforts to spread COVID kindness to communities have not placed enough emphasis on children also being affected by this pandemic. The Mara Predator Conservation Programme will engage members of its wildlife clubs through interesting avenues to help them cope with the current physical distancing rules and school closures. Factoring in their level of comprehension, MPCP will publish and distribute topical monthly wildlife club articles with artwork and essay contributions from members. Inclusion of child-friendly COVID-19 awareness posters will aid in promoting the Sustainable Development Goals of good health and well-being.

In the coming months, the Kenya Wildlife Trust will work with one of our long-term partners, Communities Health Africa Trust (CHAT), to set up a health and education programme around Amboseli’s Kitirua Conservancy. Taking a PHE (Population Health & Environment) approach, Communities Health Africa Trust will through the CORPS mentorship service, integrate health and conservation messaging to seek success for greater conservation and human welfare outcomes.

To be part of these new and exciting initiatives, read how you can support KWT here.

With Best Wishes,

Kenya Wildlife Trust Team.

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