

1

00:00:00,034 --> 00:00:04,237

[John] Cyc, Cyc, Panda...!

Cyc, Cyc, Panda Panda!

2

00:00:04,237 --> 00:00:07,473

Cyc, Cyc, Panda!

Cyc, Cyc, Panda, Panda!

3

00:00:07,473 --> 00:00:10,742

[Softer] Tension, Shuka

Tension, Shuka, Shuka.

4

00:00:10,742 --> 00:00:14,245

Tension, Shuka

Tension, Shuka, Shuka.

5

00:00:14,245 --> 00:00:19,919

[Music by David Silom]

6

00:00:20,960 --> 00:00:26,021

[Mara] Welcome, to this braided story of climate crisis in East Africa.

7

00:00:26,021 --> 00:00:30,525

I am Mara, a Storyteller of dual Kenyan and Scottish Heritage, living most of the

8

00:00:30,525 --> 00:00:31,826

year on the Kenyan coast.

9

00:00:31,993 --> 00:00:35,929

[John] And I am John,

a Kenyan Storyteller living in Nairobi.

10

00:00:35,929 --> 00:00:40,559

Together, we travelled to the north of our country, to listen to what has been

11

00:00:40,559 --> 00:00:45,480

changing for the people and their land.

Our story follows pastoralist communities,

12

00:00:45,480 --> 00:00:51,360

living through the worst drought  
for 40 years, in the border region of

13

00:00:51,360 --> 00:00:57,379

South Sudan, Northern Kenya,  
Uganda, Somalia and Ethiopia.

14

00:00:57,379 --> 00:01:02,617

[Mara] It has many beginnings, a messy middle  
and unknown endings.

15

00:01:02,617 --> 00:01:07,154

[John] Just like all the stories we are living,  
and are living us.

16

00:01:07,154 --> 00:01:12,691

[Mara] Hapo Kati Kati! In the messy middle,  
is where our work as storytellers begins.

17

00:01:13,174 --> 00:01:17,896

We gather living threads of language,  
coaxed from under the tongues of those we meet,

18

00:01:17,896 --> 00:01:23,533

and follow them back to their many beginnings.  
We braid these delicate threads into stories

19

00:01:23,533 --> 00:01:28,437

because we trust your generous imagination  
to gather under the baobab tree,

20

00:01:28,437 --> 00:01:31,106

as the Ibis begin their night cackling.

21

00:01:31,106 --> 00:01:36,410

The fire begins to crackle, and as we sip  
from the calabash we hope these stories,

22

00:01:36,410 --> 00:01:40,080

may gather long enough to have new  
conversations amongst themselves.

23

00:01:40,213 --> 00:01:45,618

[John] But we do not braid alone.  
We have found a story to be the yeast in the dough.

24

00:01:45,618 --> 00:01:51,122

Yani Mchuzi kwa Samaki  
The conductor of the story orchestra,

25

00:01:51,122 --> 00:01:59,195

and it comes from Ile Ife, our  
Yoruba neighbors in the far west of Africa.

26

00:01:59,195 --> 00:02:04,439

[Mara] It is a story of the Orishas,  
heavenly deities who became tired of

27

00:02:04,439 --> 00:02:09,536

serving the great creator Olodumare.  
They no longer wish to surrender to his

28

00:02:09,536 --> 00:02:15,641

will and some even dared plot the  
overthrow of both his physical and spiritual realm.

29

00:02:16,008 --> 00:02:21,312

He was so distant, some felt they could  
share his powers amongst themselves.

30

00:02:21,579 --> 00:02:26,783

But Olodumare knows everything, and  
acted simply and decisively.

31

00:02:26,783 --> 00:02:32,922

He withheld the rain from the earth and soon  
the world was encompassed by a staggering drought.

32

00:02:32,940 --> 00:02:37,739  
The parched ground cracked herself wide  
open, and as the Orishas and their children

33  
00:02:37,739 --> 00:02:43,019  
began to starve, the skeletons  
of beasts began to litter the Earth.

34  
00:02:43,019 --> 00:02:48,480  
After a short time, they sought to return  
to Olodumare and beg for forgiveness,

35  
00:02:48,480 --> 00:02:53,204  
in the hope the rain would return.  
In their bird form, they took to the skies.

36  
00:02:53,204 --> 00:02:58,542  
The mighty Eagle, the Sparrow,  
the Swift and others, each trying desperately,

37  
00:02:58,542 --> 00:03:01,144  
to reach the great lake in the sky.

38  
00:03:01,144 --> 00:03:05,981  
But all failed, and it appeared that all hope was lost.

39  
00:03:06,682 --> 00:03:08,580  
Then Oshun,

40  
00:03:08,580 --> 00:03:13,319  
Orisha of beauty and delight, arrived in  
her Peacock form and offered to

41  
00:03:13,319 --> 00:03:19,800  
undertake the journey. Oh, how the Orishas  
scoffed and laughed! "You might break

42  
00:03:19,800 --> 00:03:24,780  
a nail," one cried, but the Peacock insisted they let her try.

43

00:03:24,780 --> 00:03:30,180  
She took off, and began to fly towards  
the sun. She soon tired, but carried on,

44  
00:03:30,180 --> 00:03:34,980  
though her feathers became scraggly and  
black from the withering heat of the sun.

45  
00:03:34,980 --> 00:03:39,420  
The feathers were burnt from her head,  
but she kept on flying and finally,

46  
00:03:39,420 --> 00:03:45,546  
through sheer will and determination, she  
fell at the feet of Olodumare and gasped her last breath.

47  
00:03:46,013 --> 00:03:49,019  
She was a pathetic sight.

48  
00:03:49,019 --> 00:03:53,352  
Her once beautiful form was hunch-  
backed and her head was bald,

49  
00:03:53,352 --> 00:03:56,855  
covered with burns from flying  
so close to the sun.

50  
00:03:56,855 --> 00:04:03,239  
Olodumare, admiring of her tenacity,  
breathed life into her and asked her why

51  
00:04:03,239 --> 00:04:06,599  
she had embarked on such a perilous journey.

52  
00:04:06,599 --> 00:04:12,840  
She spoke, that because of the beauty,  
the joy, the pure life force on Earth, she had

53  
00:04:12,840 --> 00:04:17,120  
no choice but to risk her own life so  
that others might live.

54

00:04:17,120 --> 00:04:24,377

Olodumare saw that perhaps there was still something worth saving, and so allowed the rains to fall.

55

00:04:24,377 --> 00:04:28,139

He also stated that  
Oshun alone would be his messenger.

56

00:04:28,139 --> 00:04:34,979

However, she would return to Earth in her new form, the Vulture, and to this day she

57

00:04:34,979 --> 00:04:39,900

holds the name Ikole, the messenger of the House of Olodumare and is

58

00:04:39,900 --> 00:04:44,280

represented by both the Peacock and the Vulture.

59

00:04:44,280 --> 00:04:48,396

[John] Perhaps Peacock and Vulture teach us to hold and work with paradox.

60

00:04:48,396 --> 00:04:57,570

With our human eyes we see them as opposites, one beautiful and one ugly, one graceful, one forceful.

61

00:04:57,570 --> 00:05:01,306

But no, they are two sides of the same story.

62

00:05:01,306 --> 00:05:08,278

Unexpected twins, each one reflecting the blessings of God to the Earth in a very different way.

63

00:05:08,278 --> 00:05:13,115

Each one offering a different way of seeing, and being in the world,

64

00:05:13,115 --> 00:05:16,985

both of which we need for our ecosystems to flourish.

65

00:05:16,985 --> 00:05:24,524

We can call our ability to appreciate both,  
and work with both, a kind of 'birds-eye-seeing'.

66

00:05:24,524 --> 00:05:27,126

That is a gift of this story.

67

00:05:27,126 --> 00:05:34,499

It dares us to keep flying beyond what we think  
is possible, and receive the double blessing.

68

00:05:35,500 --> 00:05:41,705

In the paradox of our climate crisis we need  
'birds-eye-seeing', to take us beyond,

69

00:05:41,705 --> 00:05:48,043

the hopelessness of stark opposites, such as  
economic growth, or environmental protection,

70

00:05:48,043 --> 00:05:51,379

national security, or freedom of movement.

71

00:05:51,379 --> 00:06:00,019

In this podcast we will explore the 'birds-eye-seeing',  
that is holding climate stressed communities together,

72

00:06:00,019 --> 00:06:06,624

in the Horn of Africa, and reflecting with the people  
on where more of it is needed.

73

00:06:06,624 --> 00:06:10,694

Cyc, Cyc, Panda!

Cyc, Cyc, Panda, Panda!

74

00:06:10,694 --> 00:06:14,364

[Mara] So let us start at one of our beginnings.

75

00:06:14,364 --> 00:06:19,701

Everyone agrees that the weather pattern started to change in the 1970s and 1980s.

76

00:06:19,701 --> 00:06:22,340

Before that, it was far more predictable.

77

00:06:22,340 --> 00:06:26,759

Once every five years there was a drought, but that could be planned for.

78

00:06:26,759 --> 00:06:31,878

The grasses would grow thick and high, plenty to fatten the cows before the rains receded.

79

00:06:31,878 --> 00:06:36,581

[John] The rivers were streaming with fresh water and communities had plenty to drink.

80

00:06:36,581 --> 00:06:43,320

[Mara] Rituals and social gatherings allowed for time to reconnect and strengthen intergenerational familial bonds.

81

00:06:43,320 --> 00:06:50,192

[John] Those of a similar age set, known as the Rika, would undergo different initiations and rituals, for example,

82

00:06:50,220 --> 00:06:55,259

learning the roles of men and women in society, and taking care of their nature.

83

00:06:55,259 --> 00:06:57,398

[Mara] But drought years have increased.

84

00:06:57,398 --> 00:07:02,502

First, every four years, then every three, and now, every two.

85

00:07:02,502 --> 00:07:05,819

Extremes the region didn't experience before.

86

00:07:05,819 --> 00:07:11,039

In Turkana, when we spoke to the elders,  
also called the Wazee, they lamented that,

87

00:07:11,039 --> 00:07:12,743

"God has moved far away from us".

88

00:07:12,743 --> 00:07:16,913

They understand the droughts they experience  
to be a curse to their people.

89

00:07:16,913 --> 00:07:19,860

The God of yesterday was closer.

90

00:07:19,860 --> 00:07:24,000

When a people believe their pastoral way  
of life has been gifted them by the unfathomable,

91

00:07:24,000 --> 00:07:31,020

the almighty, the Creator, by God -  
a curse is very serious.

92

00:07:31,020 --> 00:07:33,627

[John] The tropics are already very changeable.

93

00:07:33,627 --> 00:07:39,698

Even within short distances you may find great variation,  
but this has become more extreme.

94

00:07:39,698 --> 00:07:42,867

Devastating floods in South Sudan.

95

00:07:42,867 --> 00:07:45,269

Extreme heat in Northern Kenya.

96

00:07:45,269 --> 00:07:49,573

As things are now, the people are reaching their limits.

97

00:07:50,306 --> 00:07:54,743

We spoke to Joseph Ngor Deng, a South Sudanese journalist,

98

00:07:54,743 --> 00:07:58,546

who has been investigating  
the crisis, and the work of Rainmakers.

99

00:07:58,546 --> 00:08:03,617

He told us about food insecurity  
in South Sudan.

100

00:08:03,617 --> 00:08:06,286

[Joseph] The ..the hunger gap in South Sudan is serious.

101

00:08:06,286 --> 00:08:13,199

According to the U.N  
WAP report, 7 million people,

102

00:08:13,199 --> 00:08:20,220

by the end of the year, will go hungry,  
will have severe food shortages, and you know,

103

00:08:20,220 --> 00:08:26,535

our country has only less than 11  
million people, so if 7, 7 million are,

104

00:08:26,535 --> 00:08:32,773

in that gap, and two point something  
are displaced in...in to neighboring country,

105

00:08:32,773 --> 00:08:35,709

so what do you expect, the number  
that remains. It's serious.

106

00:08:35,709 --> 00:08:40,260

[John] Communities have forgotten the  
old traditional practice of conserving,

107

00:08:40,260 --> 00:08:45,240

and protecting trees, of using the dead  
trees for firewood rather than cutting

108

00:08:45,240 --> 00:08:49,860  
down living trees to burn.  
The introduction of guns, led to the

109  
00:08:49,860 --> 00:08:56,492  
shooting of game, becoming a sport where  
any wild thing walking on the land was a target.

110  
00:08:57,240 --> 00:09:00,195  
Thus, loss of wildlife within the region.

111  
00:09:01,029 --> 00:09:05,640  
The invasive Mathenge tree was  
introduced to curb desertification,

112  
00:09:05,640 --> 00:09:10,970  
but began to spread like wildfire taking  
over from indigenous species and

113  
00:09:10,970 --> 00:09:13,139  
affecting the health of livestock.

114  
00:09:13,139 --> 00:09:16,742  
[Mara] And increasingly, young people  
are turning away from pastoralism,

115  
00:09:16,742 --> 00:09:20,845  
seeing it as a dangerous path due to  
the risk of violent cattle raids,

116  
00:09:20,845 --> 00:09:24,014  
as well as being non-lucrative and unsustainable.

117  
00:09:24,348 --> 00:09:27,584  
[John] But in the regions, some places have it better than others.

118  
00:09:27,584 --> 00:09:33,855  
In Uganda, the other side of the mountain,  
the rainfall is better, pasture is better.

119

00:09:33,855 --> 00:09:38,859  
So many pastoralists take their cattle  
over the border to graze.

120  
00:09:39,560 --> 00:09:44,530  
[Mara] Mwanzo mpa  
Let us pick up another beginning.

121  
00:09:44,530 --> 00:09:49,201  
This one takes us back in time  
behind the moment we started counting,

122  
00:09:49,201 --> 00:09:56,106  
because despite the worst drought in 40 years,  
despite the changes, despite the retreat of God,

123  
00:09:56,106 --> 00:10:00,143  
the people are not without hope, not without help.

124  
00:10:00,143 --> 00:10:07,782  
They have the Rainmakers, spiritual leaders who use rituals  
and deep nature observation to predict the weather,

125  
00:10:07,782 --> 00:10:13,153  
and advise a community about where to take their  
cattle and when to plant their crops.

126  
00:10:13,979 --> 00:10:17,249  
The power of these people is most well  
preserved in South Sudan,

127  
00:10:17,490 --> 00:10:23,528  
where the relative isolation from encroaching modernity  
has protected their practice, and their role.

128  
00:10:24,195 --> 00:10:29,366  
Let's listen to how Joseph paints a picture.  
Let's imagine, together.

129  
00:10:29,366 --> 00:10:37,172  
[Joseph] The rainmakers are scattered, but there are many

and they are respected people in the society,

130

00:10:37,172 --> 00:10:47,347

because when they speak, to their communities, concerning the changes in the season, what they say become reality.

131

00:10:47,347 --> 00:10:52,684

Sometimes, for themselves, they say that they speak direct to God and God listen to them.

132

00:10:52,684 --> 00:10:57,688

In the communities, there are ways that you can tell this person is a Rainmaker.

133

00:10:57,688 --> 00:11:03,093

One, they are unique in the culture, the clothes that they wear are unique.

134

00:11:03,093 --> 00:11:09,698

Anyone cannot put on those clothes that they have, if you are confirmed to be the Rainmaker.

135

00:11:09,698 --> 00:11:14,168

And then again, they are also unique in another way.

136

00:11:14,168 --> 00:11:20,579

Sometimes you could find another Rainmaker cannot wear the shoes, cannot have the shoes, and

137

00:11:20,579 --> 00:11:28,313

other Rainmakers can also put on the skin, the dry skin of of the goat or maybe of an, uh, of an animal,

138

00:11:28,313 --> 00:11:32,883

and then again you can also tell, another Rainmaker cannot sit on the table,

139

00:11:32,883 --> 00:11:41,056

but instead they can sit on the local mats, or, on the dry skin of a goat that has been slaughtered.

140

00:11:41,056 --> 00:11:45,626

Again, the way they are looking, to their hair,  
their hair, they don't cut their hair,

141

00:11:45,626 --> 00:11:51,531

they they leave it grow, and sometimes  
you, you could even tell.

142

00:11:51,531 --> 00:11:56,735

And even this spear that they have, they  
could hold, or, like, they stick.

143

00:11:56,735 --> 00:12:01,906

These are the things. Other people also,  
wear beads, on their necks.

144

00:12:01,906 --> 00:12:09,420

If you are passing in a village, and you do not know whether  
that person is a Rainmaker, or not, you can go,

145

00:12:09,420 --> 00:12:13,019

you can even see the shrines, something like shrines.

146

00:12:13,019 --> 00:12:18,180

And again, the Rainmaker, you can also get  
him having a lot of followers, those who

147

00:12:18,180 --> 00:12:22,019

are his followers you could find them  
help, around him.

148

00:12:22,019 --> 00:12:28,500

There are no women who are Rainmakers,  
in our area, but women participate, when

149

00:12:28,500 --> 00:12:33,959

the Rainmakers are conducting the events.  
You could find women gathering

150

00:12:33,959 --> 00:12:40,370  
themselves, and then they begin to be  
clapping their hands while singing songs that praise,

151  
00:12:40,370 --> 00:12:43,372  
that Rainmaker, when they are doing the events.

152  
00:12:43,372 --> 00:12:48,943  
And then you could also see the Rainmakers surrounded  
by young men and the young women.

153  
00:12:48,943 --> 00:12:53,280  
The boys could be seen in a group singing  
their own songs,

154  
00:12:53,280 --> 00:12:59,100  
the women and the young girls, and then,  
the men and the Elders, like that you see?

155  
00:12:59,100 --> 00:13:04,260  
There are some food, a Rainmaker cannot  
eat, and the relationship with the community,

156  
00:13:04,260 --> 00:13:10,227  
is very strong, because they don't speak anyhow,  
and they don't perform the duties anyhow.

157  
00:13:10,227 --> 00:13:13,930  
They do it at a time when they are calling for the rains,

158  
00:13:13,930 --> 00:13:20,468  
and the government, the authorities in the areas  
do not interfere with their activities.

159  
00:13:20,468 --> 00:13:24,505  
They are trusted by the government,  
because they are not the strangers.

160  
00:13:24,505 --> 00:13:29,609  
They are no danger to the government.  
Whatever they do is not affecting the government,

161

00:13:29,609 --> 00:13:35,013

and instead it sometimes helps.

Government consider it, like they are helpful in the society.

162

00:13:35,639 --> 00:13:40,317

One of the things that they observe, is the migration of the birds,

163

00:13:40,317 --> 00:13:46,560

Swarm of the birds, if the birds migrate or fly from one place to another. this is one sign.

164

00:13:46,560 --> 00:13:52,427

Another sign they also see, the changes in the leaves of the trees, are also indications.

165

00:13:52,427 --> 00:13:55,996

Another thing also which they also observe, the stars.

166

00:13:55,996 --> 00:14:05,279

These are stars, at night, when they are sitting at night, they begin to put their eyes up on the sky,

167

00:14:05,279 --> 00:14:10,740

to see how the stars are look like, and even the changes in the stars from other.

168

00:14:10,740 --> 00:14:15,979

I don't know how they do it, but that is what, one of the ways that you can also notice.

169

00:14:15,979 --> 00:14:22,050

The movement of the cattle, from place to another place, are also indications,

170

00:14:22,050 --> 00:14:31,691

about how they observe, and also, when the crops are cultivated when they are germinated,

171

00:14:31,691 --> 00:14:36,161

they can tell, "This year there's going to be pests and disease."

172

00:14:36,161 --> 00:14:41,933

And then from there, they can tell  
you what to do, to prevent that pests and disease.

173

00:14:41,933 --> 00:14:47,040

Sometimes, you could see them  
going to the forest, you spend time there,

174

00:14:47,040 --> 00:14:53,220

going around checking the leaves of the  
trees, others could go to the bigger tree,

175

00:14:53,220 --> 00:14:58,139

there are certain type of the trees that  
they target, they can go and sit and read

176

00:14:58,139 --> 00:15:01,915

and others can even go and dig around to  
even take out the roots of,

177

00:15:01,915 --> 00:15:05,852

the roots of the trees that that are in those for say.

178

00:15:05,985 --> 00:15:08,554

[John] That's how they are in South Sudan.

179

00:15:08,554 --> 00:15:14,525

In Kenya, the Rainmakers are also active  
and there are similarities in their practice,

180

00:15:14,525 --> 00:15:16,627

but difference also.

181

00:15:16,627 --> 00:15:21,364

We attended are Rainmaking ceremony  
and saw how they read the intestines.

182

00:15:21,364 --> 00:15:28,937

They will select a goat, skillfully pierce it directly through the heart, so that death is swift.

183

00:15:29,339 --> 00:15:36,109

Then they will skillfully cut the stomach to extract the intestines known as the 'mara'.

184

00:15:36,109 --> 00:15:40,320

Arrange it on well-placed green cut leaves.

185

00:15:40,320 --> 00:15:45,950

One to two Rainmakers will zone into the mara, using their eyes and hands.

186

00:15:46,260 --> 00:15:49,987

[Mara] How the hills and valleys correspond with the large and small intestine.

187

00:15:50,519 --> 00:15:54,757

[John] How spots and the intestines can depict movement of cattle or rainfall drops,

188

00:15:54,757 --> 00:15:57,793

to hidden dangers in the community.

189

00:15:57,793 --> 00:16:01,696

[Mara] How even the drinking of the blood reveals even more accuracy.

190

00:16:01,696 --> 00:16:10,336

[John] How the Wazee both agree and disagree politely, on the mirror intestines below them, on likely events to come.

191

00:16:10,800 --> 00:16:15,240

These traditions sometimes come into conflict with Christian believers, and

192

00:16:15,240 --> 00:16:19,019

communities who see their power as

witchcraft and evil.

193

00:16:19,019 --> 00:16:23,100

But their predictions are keeping the people alive, and South Sudanese

194

00:16:23,100 --> 00:16:26,279

government recognizes their leadership and credibility.

195

00:16:26,279 --> 00:16:31,079

In these areas of South Sudan, scientific weather prediction services

196

00:16:31,079 --> 00:16:35,639

are unable to reach the people because of both a lack of meteorological

197

00:16:35,639 --> 00:16:40,980

capacity, and also poor communication channels to reach the people who need it.

198

00:16:40,980 --> 00:16:46,500

This practice of Rainmaking, known as an indigenous technology, is present across

199

00:16:46,500 --> 00:16:51,959

the whole region, but the whole region is no longer whole.

200

00:16:51,959 --> 00:16:55,005

[Mara] It is time for yet another beginning.

201

00:16:55,005 --> 00:16:57,807

Yes, the region is no longer whole.

202

00:16:58,019 --> 00:17:03,420

South Sudan borders Kenya, and Uganda to the South, and Kenya also borders Somalia

203

00:17:03,420 --> 00:17:08,699  
and Ethiopia to the east and north. But  
of course it wasn't always so.

204  
00:17:08,699 --> 00:17:14,459  
In 1884, European imperialists met in  
Berlin at the peak of what became known

205  
00:17:14,459 --> 00:17:19,199  
as the Scramble for Africa, and began to  
divide it up amongst themselves, creating

206  
00:17:19,199 --> 00:17:22,980  
invisible borders between nations where  
once, there were none.

207  
00:17:22,980 --> 00:17:27,299  
Although the countries of Africa are no  
longer under colonial rule, the borders

208  
00:17:27,299 --> 00:17:31,799  
remain, and impose national identities  
and limits on people that make no sense

209  
00:17:31,799 --> 00:17:37,080  
in their migrating pastoralist lives.  
As the natural resources of rain, and so

210  
00:17:37,080 --> 00:17:42,059  
also pasture become increasingly scarce  
and patchy, some countries and regions

211  
00:17:42,059 --> 00:17:46,380  
get a better climate deal than others.  
But the certainty of this is decreasing.

212  
00:17:46,380 --> 00:17:51,000  
[John] As water resources drop and nations look  
to protect their people and their interests

213  
00:17:51,000 --> 00:17:55,186

conflicts and clashes seem inevitable.

214

00:17:55,186 --> 00:18:00,056

We spoke to Stanley kibiu Tiritu,  
National Management of Disaster Officer,

215

00:18:00,056 --> 00:18:04,326

based in West Pokot County,  
a county bordering Turkana.

216

00:18:04,326 --> 00:18:08,763

His mandate is to ensure that  
drought is managed in the region.

217

00:18:08,763 --> 00:18:14,668

[Stanley] We have seen our livestock move  
to Uganda, in numbers, and they don't come back.

218

00:18:14,668 --> 00:18:19,020

Like right now we have 70% of animals in Uganda.

219

00:18:19,020 --> 00:18:23,179

So the 30% that's around ...

220

00:18:23,760 --> 00:18:28,799

You can see, if you, if Uganda closes their  
border right now,

221

00:18:28,799 --> 00:18:33,900

or we get that into trouble of some sort with Uganda,

222

00:18:33,900 --> 00:18:39,240

we left 70% of our livestock there,  
stuck, so, you can see, with the climate

223

00:18:39,240 --> 00:18:43,740

change our numbers  
have been increasing to Uganda,

224

00:18:43,740 --> 00:18:47,340

especially their life, their livestock numbers,

225

00:18:47,340 --> 00:18:51,063

and, uh, they don't come back because,

226

00:18:51,063 --> 00:18:56,801

the, the grasses don't regrow enough, to support them.

227

00:18:56,968 --> 00:19:01,020

So you, we have, we have been seeing  
animals going, they are not coming back.

228

00:19:01,020 --> 00:19:05,942

But the good news is that we still see  
farmers going there to pick them for selling.

229

00:19:05,942 --> 00:19:10,646

So they are able to access them,  
and use the money to buy food here.

230

00:19:11,280 --> 00:19:16,080

People seek where, there is that, that  
resource, that natural resource, that's

231

00:19:16,080 --> 00:19:20,940

water and pasture. They move from West Pokot  
to Uganda. And remember, Northern Uganda's got

232

00:19:20,940 --> 00:19:25,891

a water district. We have also Pokots living, so  
they can accommodate their brothers, you know.

233

00:19:25,891 --> 00:19:30,000

That's, that's really, that  
Brotherhood, so you don't just force your

234

00:19:30,000 --> 00:19:33,840

brother to get away when he has a  
problem, so you need to accommodate him,

235

00:19:33,840 --> 00:19:38,419  
after they have the the drought. [continues in Kiswahili].

236  
00:19:39,960 --> 00:19:44,806  
[Calistus, ICPAC meteorologist] Uh, maybe  
this one leads to security and insecurity.

237  
00:19:44,806 --> 00:19:50,777  
[Stanley] Yes.  
[Calistus] There has been, uh, even at the local level.

238  
00:19:50,777 --> 00:19:57,916  
[Stanley] Yes.  
[Calistus] It seems, uh, climate change variability, and variability is cor, is

239  
00:19:57,916 --> 00:20:00,652  
contributing to insecurity.  
[Stanley] Yes, yes.

240  
00:20:00,652 --> 00:20:06,923  
[Calistus] And because, uh, on the Turkana side we have issues on...  
[Stanley] Marakwet.

241  
00:20:06,923 --> 00:20:14,263  
[Calistus] Marakwet, issues... Uganda you have issues.  
Is it true or what is your take on it?

242  
00:20:14,263 --> 00:20:19,834  
[Stanley] Um...both...  
Through all the places, we have a problem.

243  
00:20:19,834 --> 00:20:28,641  
You know, you cannot just go to somebody's place, and then seek refuge,  
take the resources they have, deplete the resources they have,

244  
00:20:28,641 --> 00:20:31,679  
without a quarrel.  
Somebody might quarrel.

245  
00:20:31,679 --> 00:20:35,460  
In Uganda for example we haven't heard

of any quarrels of yet.

246

00:20:35,460 --> 00:20:41,851

But last year squabble emerged that we have a border of Morato hills.

247

00:20:41,851 --> 00:20:47,355

Where, where Pokot try to push the animals beyond their boundaries that they were given.

248

00:20:47,355 --> 00:20:54,394

So, if you go to Turkana, that is obvious. You know, Turkanas and us, we have a very bad blood.

249

00:20:54,394 --> 00:20:59,280

And even if they accept, they accept for a few days, and remember, the,

250

00:20:59,280 --> 00:21:04,620

the, the, the river the Takwa River... okay?

251

00:21:04,620 --> 00:21:09,600

Goes ... It has a lot of pasture within the, the,

252

00:21:09,600 --> 00:21:14,640

the, the repairan of that particular river, a lot of grass, eh?

253

00:21:14,640 --> 00:21:18,647

So we need to compete with them, we need to go and visit, "Please help us when we have a problem."

254

00:21:18,647 --> 00:21:23,918

But they can accept for few days or a few weeks, and then they just start a feud.

255

00:21:23,918 --> 00:21:28,221

[Mara] This colonial beginning brings more than national borders.

256

00:21:28,221 --> 00:21:32,925

It brings an economy based on cold hard cash, rather than herds of cattle.

257

00:21:32,925 --> 00:21:37,896

It brings a modern education system which prepares people for the global economy,

258

00:21:37,896 --> 00:21:41,632

rather than pastoralism.

It brings different belief systems

259

00:21:41,632 --> 00:21:46,919

and different leaders.

That colonial economic story tells the

260

00:21:46,919 --> 00:21:51,419

community that achieving success and security needs modern education and

261

00:21:51,419 --> 00:21:57,344

urban jobs, and that Rainmaking, pastoralism and farming is a thing of the past.

262

00:21:57,344 --> 00:22:00,614

[John] Let's not forget the speed of change with technology.

263

00:22:00,614 --> 00:22:07,319

Mobile phones, smartphones, WhatsApp forecasting, M-PESA, the mobile money transfer service,

264

00:22:07,319 --> 00:22:13,799

and transports such as the boda-boda, or moto cycle taxis.

265

00:22:13,799 --> 00:22:18,299

Technology has helped to share climate information easily, through digital

266

00:22:18,299 --> 00:22:23,640

communication platforms such as WhatsApp messaging, enhancing information to be

267

00:22:23,640 --> 00:22:29,580

shared quickly, but has also led to the fragmentation of families, as youth spend

268

00:22:29,580 --> 00:22:35,508

lots of their time on the devices, and no time to share a sitting, and learn from the elders.

269

00:22:36,275 --> 00:22:41,479

Benefits include mobile money, easing trade, boosting the rural economy,

270

00:22:42,013 --> 00:22:45,349

traditional artists making money through online platforms,

271

00:22:45,349 --> 00:22:49,080

and also enabling people to save money on their phones.

272

00:22:49,080 --> 00:22:55,757

Rapid urbanization is fragmenting rural traditional livelihoods, changing family dynamics.

273

00:22:56,524 --> 00:23:00,761

[Mara] There you have them.  
Enough beginnings to inch your way forward.

274

00:23:00,761 --> 00:23:06,733

Hold them tight, as we dive into the messy middle, looking for signs of 'birds-eye-seeing'.

275

00:23:06,733 --> 00:23:10,602

[John] Cyc, Cyc, Panda!  
Cyc, Cyc, Panda, Panda!

276

00:23:10,602 --> 00:23:15,940

[John] In the messy middle, the Kenyan regions of Turkana and West Pokot,

277

00:23:15,940 --> 00:23:22,860

local meteorological centers are working hand in hand with the traditional Rainmakers.

278

00:23:22,860 --> 00:23:28,799

We met Francis Muinde, County Director of Meteorological Services in Turkana.

279

00:23:28,799 --> 00:23:34,455

He has been in this role for 12 years, and has created bonds with traditional Rainmakers.

280

00:23:34,455 --> 00:23:39,919

He attends each traditional forecasting ceremony of the Wazees,

281

00:23:39,919 --> 00:23:45,240

Rainmakers, and gathers their climate information. He shares his science-based

282

00:23:45,240 --> 00:23:49,919

forecast with them, integrating their indigenous traditional knowledge,

283

00:23:49,919 --> 00:23:52,435

to develop a regional weather prediction.

284

00:23:53,503 --> 00:23:57,106

You might ask yourself, why is this important?

285

00:23:57,106 --> 00:24:03,010

It builds and unites possibilities of old and new ways, working together.

286

00:24:03,010 --> 00:24:06,346

[Mara] Yes, the community are familiar with our form of science,

287

00:24:06,346 --> 00:24:09,315

even if they may not understand how it works.

288

00:24:09,315 --> 00:24:14,019

An old Mzee in Turkana referred to a scientific tool as "the glass box",

289

00:24:14,019 --> 00:24:18,923

which, in many stories, is a thing of wonder and beauty, a giver of gifts.

290

00:24:18,923 --> 00:24:25,028

For the Mzee, it was a tool, an indication of weather patterns, much like the buds on a tree branch,

291

00:24:25,028 --> 00:24:30,999

or a swarm of butterflies on a particular morning. A sign, an indication of meteorology in

292

00:24:30,999 --> 00:24:36,179

an entirely different language. There appeared to be a curiosity and openness,

293

00:24:36,179 --> 00:24:41,641

to this different kind of technology, and a desire to work with it, rather than against it.

294

00:24:42,008 --> 00:24:46,178

Rather than seeing these two ways of predicting weather as conflicting,

295

00:24:46,178 --> 00:24:48,413

they are seeing them as complementary,

296

00:24:48,413 --> 00:24:52,380

and this is not just about the weather predictions themselves, but also about

297

00:24:52,380 --> 00:24:56,700

the networks and approaches they each have, to access the community.

298

00:24:56,700 --> 00:25:01,500

The Rainmakers are connected to everyone,  
through their status and visibility.

299

00:25:01,500 --> 00:25:05,280

Through word of mouth, they have  
extensive reach, while local meteorology

300

00:25:05,280 --> 00:25:08,940

services access their audiences through local radio.

301

00:25:08,940 --> 00:25:14,039

Is this not perhaps a 'bird's-eye-seeing'?  
Bridging the ancient and modern worlds,

302

00:25:14,039 --> 00:25:15,468

and their knowledge systems?

303

00:25:15,468 --> 00:25:19,605

[John] Cyc, Cyc, Panda!  
Cyc, Cyc, Panda, Panda!

304

00:25:19,605 --> 00:25:24,975

In the messy middle, an annual festival  
which remembers, and celebrates a Peace Accord,

305

00:25:24,975 --> 00:25:33,415

which started in 1978, brings delegations from all  
the neighboring nations bordering Turkana.

306

00:25:33,415 --> 00:25:38,019

They come to renew their commitment  
to one another, to keep peace.

307

00:25:38,019 --> 00:25:40,559

Riverbeds as the center stage for the festival.

308

00:25:40,559 --> 00:25:48,694

The sky. Trees giving backdrop. Crowds of communities  
coloured in various red ochre clay.

309

00:25:48,694 --> 00:25:56,100

Cars of government officials streaming in,  
to honour the event. Men and ladies adorned with jingles,

310

00:25:56,100 --> 00:26:02,705

and trumpets, reaching up to several hundred people from  
different neighbouring wards and sub counties,

311

00:26:02,705 --> 00:26:10,545

within Turkana region. Clearly, the weapons of war,  
buried underneath a decorated structure of art,

312

00:26:10,545 --> 00:26:12,320

are the base of the Peace Accord.

313

00:26:12,320 --> 00:26:17,417

[Mara] Songs, stories and music joyfully  
celebrating peace, fill the air.

314

00:26:17,417 --> 00:26:23,340

The audiences arrive, amidst the dust joining  
the throng. The magnificence of the

315

00:26:23,340 --> 00:26:29,293

Ateker peoples dressed in their splendour.  
Soldiers in arms, to ensure that peace prevails.

316

00:26:29,293 --> 00:26:34,140

[John] The role of a festival is vital,  
for the coming together of diverse communities.

317

00:26:34,140 --> 00:26:38,880

It is good for communities,  
to come together and share moments,

318

00:26:38,880 --> 00:26:46,340

celebrate, commemorate, share values,  
understanding, and also give back to the rural economy.

319

00:26:46,340 --> 00:26:51,144

This is a place where arts can flourish  
and bring people together.

320

00:26:51,144 --> 00:26:56,820

And the artists have important messages to share,  
through what they make.

321

00:26:56,820 --> 00:27:00,885

We spoke to one musician who had created  
a piece of music about peace.

322

00:27:00,885 --> 00:27:03,020

This is what he was saying.

323

00:27:03,020 --> 00:27:07,590

[Musician] The key message is,  
let us have development, with peace.

324

00:27:07,590 --> 00:27:12,828

There is no way you can have peace, no.  
There's no way you can have development, without peace.

325

00:27:12,828 --> 00:27:36,880

[Conversations in Kiswahili and indigenous language]

326

00:27:36,880 --> 00:28:13,309

[Music, rhythmic strumming and song, by David Silom]

327

00:28:13,340 --> 00:28:16,078

[Mara] Is this not a 'bird's-eye-seeing'?

328

00:28:16,078 --> 00:28:20,381

Bridging communities across the disaster of  
externally imposed borders.

329

00:28:20,381 --> 00:28:24,851

[John] In the messy middle, entrepreneurs  
are seeking new ways to revive the economy.

330

00:28:24,851 --> 00:28:30,823

The tourism prospector from Rwanda,  
a neighboring country in Eastern Africa,

331

00:28:30,823 --> 00:28:39,463

Products stemming from the neem tree industry  
and the festival food supplier, with an eye for opportunities.

332

00:28:39,463 --> 00:28:42,765

[Entrepreneur] When I was in Uganda, and you  
go outside it's raining, so it's a rainy season,

333

00:28:42,765 --> 00:28:50,605

and when you cross here, it's totally different world.  
It's, uh, it's giving an impression that the, the area,

334

00:28:50,605 --> 00:28:57,077

it needs a lot of work in terms of conservation.  
And me as a tour operator, I feel like we need to

335

00:28:57,077 --> 00:29:02,414

develop more responsible tourism,  
and eco-tourism, eco-friendly tourism?

336

00:29:02,414 --> 00:29:11,388

That means bringing people together, for, for  
joining efforts to sustain the, our trees, our rivers,

337

00:29:11,388 --> 00:29:20,659

it is very important. But also engaging the local community,  
in a local friendly activity, I mean eco-friendly activities.

338

00:29:20,659 --> 00:29:32,305

So that means, my perspective, my vision for the tourism  
here, it's also to engage with the visitors in, in sustaining

339

00:29:32,305 --> 00:29:39,043

what we have already as a natural resources.  
Our clients mostly they come from the U.S. and Europe,

340

00:29:39,043 --> 00:29:45,582

and, eh, to be more specific, to work with social media influencers.

341

00:29:45,582 --> 00:29:47,817

[Lively Music from the festival]

342

00:29:47,840 --> 00:29:55,089

[Mara] Is this not a 'bird's-eye-seeing' which seeks to offer new generations, new income generating possibilities,

343

00:29:55,089 --> 00:29:59,927

which not only keeps them in their community, but protects the environment from further erosion.

344

00:29:59,927 --> 00:30:06,132

[John] In the messy middle, the triangle schools initiative in Uganda, is an exploration of unity.

345

00:30:06,132 --> 00:30:12,403

Children from conflicting communities are educated together, in a commitment towards building,

346

00:30:12,403 --> 00:30:17,700

lasting trust and interdependence.

[Mara] Is this not a 'bird's-eye-seeing', which

347

00:30:17,700 --> 00:30:22,440

breaks down the deep-rooted tribal conflict, through new generations

348

00:30:22,440 --> 00:30:27,000

of children, learning, playing and dreaming a future together.

349

00:30:27,000 --> 00:30:32,039

Dreaming of a future that borrows from the past, is how we have always lived.

350

00:30:32,039 --> 00:30:36,419

When John and I visited Lodwar, a town in the middle of nowhere, some might claim,

351

00:30:36,419 --> 00:30:40,320

the evidence of cultural borrowing in the youth was evident.

352

00:30:40,320 --> 00:30:43,860

We drove around witnessing young, beautiful girls, wearing their

353

00:30:43,860 --> 00:30:47,700

traditional shuka, their bead necklaces draped round their necks, and the

354

00:30:47,700 --> 00:30:51,899

hairstyle, shaved at the sides and braided at the top, in contrast to the

355

00:30:51,899 --> 00:30:55,860

young men, whipping up the dust as they powered through on motorcycles, their

356

00:30:55,860 --> 00:31:01,080

elaborate dreadlocks and braided styles, extraordinary sunglasses that imbue a

357

00:31:01,080 --> 00:31:05,520

Mad Max steampunk vibe, all the while draping themselves in the traditional

358

00:31:05,520 --> 00:31:09,960

three-quarter length shuka, a blanket casually thrown across their shoulders.

359

00:31:09,960 --> 00:31:16,421

An embodiment of a fused identity, the old, and the new, seeking ways to move forward together.

360

00:31:16,421 --> 00:31:19,423

Another sign of 'bird's-eye-seeing'.

361

00:31:19,423 --> 00:31:24,027

Or maybe, in this case, it is a Peacock and  
Vulture, feather swapping.

362

00:31:24,027 --> 00:31:27,496

[John] Cyc, Cyc, Panda!

Cyc, Cyc, Panda, Panda!

363

00:31:27,496 --> 00:31:30,131

[Mara] But what of our story's endings?

364

00:31:30,240 --> 00:31:35,100

[John] Our conversations with Joseph, and our  
travels to Northern Kenya revealed many

365

00:31:35,100 --> 00:31:40,620

flashes of 'birds-eye-seeing'.

But are these flashes enough to stitch

366

00:31:40,620 --> 00:31:45,059

the story of this climate stressed land,  
and its climate stressed people together?

367

00:31:45,059 --> 00:31:48,179

The is the part that really hurts.

368

00:31:48,813 --> 00:31:51,515

We don't know if it is.

369

00:31:51,682 --> 00:31:58,440

Where 'birds-eye-seeing' can reveal new stories  
to live into, we find hope and creativity.

370

00:31:58,440 --> 00:32:02,490

But in some places, the speed of change  
has left a kind of blindness,

371

00:32:02,490 --> 00:32:09,899

a kind of gasping, as the story people have been  
living by, falls away to nothing.

372

00:32:09,899 --> 00:32:14,900

[Mara] The community used to have many rituals  
and spaces, in which old and young came together.

373

00:32:14,900 --> 00:32:19,559

But now those practices fall silent.  
The young suck up compelling stories,

374

00:32:19,559 --> 00:32:23,700

and images through their mobile phones.  
Is it that they no longer crave

375

00:32:23,700 --> 00:32:26,760

the stories of their Elders to warm them  
in the dark?

376

00:32:26,760 --> 00:32:31,046

[John] Their children who cannot access the  
schooling they need to succeed in the modern world.

377

00:32:31,046 --> 00:32:37,185

But neither are they being taught the old ways,  
the indigenous training, that taught them,

378

00:32:37,185 --> 00:32:39,179

the ways of the land.

379

00:32:39,179 --> 00:32:43,740

What will become of them?  
They are young men, eager to marry,

380

00:32:43,740 --> 00:32:47,580

and put down roots,  
but the people are now too many.

381

00:32:47,580 --> 00:32:51,429

The land is too parched, to produce the  
cows they need for dowry.

382

00:32:51,429 --> 00:32:57,659

Without cows, they cannot marry.  
[Mara] These truths are difficult to hear.

383  
00:32:57,659 --> 00:33:02,100  
Loose ends we do not yet know  
how to braid into the whole.

384  
00:33:02,100 --> 00:33:05,974  
But a storyteller's gift goes further  
than retelling what we've heard.

385  
00:33:05,974 --> 00:33:11,580  
We can also birth new stories into the world.  
What if these people were brought together

386  
00:33:11,580 --> 00:33:15,779  
in a regenerative storytelling practice,  
to remember the stories that

387  
00:33:15,779 --> 00:33:19,718  
have nourished them, and to develop new  
ones which can carry them forward?

388  
00:33:19,718 --> 00:33:26,223  
[John] What if they could grow imagined futures which  
bridge divided generations, and divided communities?

389  
00:33:26,223 --> 00:33:32,095  
[Mara] Peacock and Vulture are knocking at the door,  
asking to be told, eager to help the people,

390  
00:33:32,095 --> 00:33:38,867  
build the images and language which will re-anchor them,  
to the wealth of the wild world, and to each other.

391  
00:33:39,840 --> 00:33:42,840  
[John] Tension, Shuka,  
Tension, Shuka, Shuka,

392  
00:33:42,840 --> 00:33:46,175  
Tension, Shuka,

Tension, Shuka, Shuka,

393

00:33:46,175 --> 00:33:49,442

Cyc, Cyc, Panda!

Cyc, Cyc, Panda, Panda!

394

00:33:49,442 --> 00:33:52,511

Cyc, Cyc, Panda!

Cyc, Cyc, Panda, Panda!

395

00:33:52,511 --> 00:33:56,247

Tension, Shuka,

Tension, Shuka, Shuka

396

00:33:56,247 --> 00:34:20,867

[Music]

397

00:34:20,867 --> 00:34:24,369

[Mara] Thanks to our project partners

Adverse Camber and ICPAC,

398

00:34:24,369 --> 00:34:30,320

and the project funders The British Council.