

# Ekai Nabenyo: A Young Man's Fight Against Climate Change in Kenya

Grant Type: **Dollar support**

Dollar Amount: **\$4,575**

Foundation Name: **Global Greengrants Fund**

## What was your objective with the grant or initiative?

The people of Turkana County live in the poorest region in Kenya. As the impact of climate change worsens and droughts and famine become more common, the community is seeing its traditional means of survival slowly disappear. The lakes and rivers are drying up, and livestock is dying off. Land the community once used for grazing is being grabbed by oil and gas companies seeking to plunder the area's resources. Ekai Nabenyo, a young, indigenous man from Lorengelup village who witnessed what has been happening to his community, decided to do something about it. In 2012, he and other young Turkanas founded the Lorengelup Community Development Initiative. Global Greengrants Fund gave a small grant to Nabenyo's organization to help empower local youths to protect the land, culture, and community from the perils of climate change.

## What were the results of this grant or initiative?

Funding from Global Greengrants Fund helped Nabenyo and the Lorengelup Community Development Initiative raise community awareness about climate change and the harmful practices of oil and gas companies. Following this initial grant, the youth-led group was able to access further funding for a tree-planting campaign that added 77,000 native trees to the village and helped fund the installation of a drinking well that has improved access to clean water for 1,000 community members. The group mobilized partners to implement a school project that grew the student population from 200 in 2014 to 500 in 2015. Global Greengrants Fund sponsored Nabenyo to attend the U.N. climate talks in Paris, France, in December 2015 to demand that world leaders hear the Turkana people's call for climate justice and, in his own words, to

“ensure his people—along with others in Africa—do not lose out to drought and developers.” Nabenyo shared his story with the international community via The Guardian, Devex, Radio France International, and others in a campaign that reached more than 7 million people on social media.

## Why would you say this grant or initiative had outsized impact?

The grant the Lorengelup Community Development Initiative received from Global Greengrants Fund enabled the group to inform a larger number of community members—even reaching neighboring communities—about climate change and their rights to protect their ancestral lands from harmful gas and oil extraction. Nabenyo said that “without the support from Global Greengrants Fund, our work could not have been felt by our community, who are now more equipped to fight for their rights than they were just 2 years ago.”

Global Greengrants Fund believes that the best and most sustainable solutions to environmental degradation and social injustice come from the people directly affected by them. As Nabenyo put it, “If we don't advocate for the cleanliness and conservation of our environment, then who else will? This is for our future generations, our livelihoods, our health, and our people.”



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