



**14TH
EDITION**

FESTIVAL
INFO PACK



MARSABIT LAKE TURKANA CULTURAL FESTIVAL AND HALF MARATHON

*"Celebrating Our Cultural Heritage, Building Our
Future: A Festival of Unity and Opportunities"*

Marsabit
County

3RD – 7TH DECEMBER 2025 | LOIYANGALANI, MARSABIT

WELCOME TO MARSABIT LAKE TURKANA CULTURAL FESTIVAL 2025

**CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE, BUILDING OUR FUTURE:
A FESTIVAL OF UNITY, CULTURE, AND OPPORTUNITY**



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MARSABIT LAKE TURKANA
CULTURAL FESTIVAL



Loiyangalani
MARSABIT COUNTY

**OUR CULTURE
OUR PEOPLE
OUR COUNTY**



*“Celebrating Our Cultural
Heritage, Building Our Future:
A Festival of Unity and
opportunities”*

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR



It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the County Government and the people of Marsabit, to warmly welcome you to the 14th Edition of the Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival, taking place from 3rd to 7th December 2023 in the fascinating town of Loiyangalani a place where the desert meets the lake, and where the timeless rhythms of our heritage echo across the northern frontier of Kenya. Since its inception in 2008, this festival has grown from a modest community gathering into one of Kenya's most iconic celebrations of cultural diversity, peace, and unity. Set against the breathtaking backdrop of Lake Turkana, the Jade Sea, the festival has become a living symbol of hope, resilience, and coexistence among the fourteen ethnic communities of Marsabit County. Each year, Loiyangalani transforms into a vibrant mosaic of colour, song, and dance, where the past meets the present, and where visitors experience the true spirit of Kenya's northern frontier. The Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival embodies the spirit of this year's theme, *"Celebrating Our Cultural Heritage, Rising in Unity: Strengthening Partnerships for Peace and Prosperity."* It is a powerful reminder that culture is not just a reflection of our identity; it is the foundation upon which peace, development, and mutual understanding are built. Through this festival, we celebrate the shared humanity that binds us all while highlighting the invaluable role of our cultural traditions in promoting social harmony, dialogue, and resilience.

For the pastoral and agropastoral communities of Marsabit, this event holds deep and enduring significance. It is more than a cultural showcase; it is a celebration of life itself. Here, communities that have for centuries thrived in some of Kenya's most challenging environments gather to celebrate their resilience, ingenuity, and interdependence. The festival provides a platform for reflection, cultural exchange, and empowerment, reaffirming that culture is both a source of pride and a pathway to progress. It reminds us that even amid the pressures of modernization and climate change, our traditions, stories, and values remain the guiding compass of who we are and what we aspire to become. This annual celebration also underscores Marsabit's place as a beacon of peace, partnership, and sustainable development in Kenya's northern region. It attracts thousands of visitors from across the country and beyond — from government and diplomatic representatives to scholars, investors, and tourists, all drawn by the beauty, harmony, and authenticity that define this unique gathering. The festival has become not

only a stage for cultural expression but also a platform for tourism promotion, intercommunity understanding, and international cooperation. I take this opportunity to extend my deepest and most sincere appreciation to His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Kenya, for his unwavering support and commitment to the people of Marsabit. Your continued investment in development, peacebuilding, and national unity has made it possible for festivals like this to thrive and flourish as symbols of Kenya's collective progress.

I also wish to acknowledge with great respect the presence of distinguished dignitaries, Presidents and representatives from neighbouring nations, Ambassadors and members of the diplomatic corps, Governors from other counties, Members of the Senate, and Members of Parliament, whose participation reaffirms our shared belief in the power of culture to unite people, strengthen partnerships, and promote prosperity across borders. Your presence here today is a profound gesture of solidarity and friendship with the people of Marsabit. To all visitors, partners, and friends of Marsabit, both local and international, thank you for finding time to celebrate with us. Your presence is a testament to the universal truth that culture connects us all. As you experience the magic of Loiyangalani, the colours of our heritage, the rhythms of our songs, and the warmth of our people, may you carry with you the enduring message of this festival: that peace begins with understanding, and prosperity is born of unity. Welcome to Marsabit, a land of breathtaking beauty, boundless culture, and unyielding hope. Welcome to Loiyangalani, where our stories are told, our dreams are shared, and our unity rises ever brighter across the desert sky.

H.E. Hon. Mohamud Mohamed Ali
Governor, Marsabit County



MESSAGE FROM **THE DEUPTY GOVERNOR**

CHAIRMAN OF THE FESTIVAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

It is a great honour and privilege to welcome you all to the 14th Edition of the Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival, held from 3rd to 7th December 2025 in the serene town of Loiyangalani, on the shores of the magnificent Lake Turkana. This annual gathering has grown into one of Kenya's most distinguished platforms for promoting peace, cultural expression, and unity, a true reflection of Marsabit's resilience, diversity, and progress. The Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival stands as a beacon of hope and a practical response to the unique social and developmental challenges that have historically faced Marsabit and the wider northern region. For decades, pastoral and agropastoral communities have endured cycles of drought, conflict over scarce resources, and socio-economic marginalization. These challenges have not only tested our resilience but also underscored the urgent need for sustained peace, cultural cohesion, and inclusive growth. It is against this background that the festival was born to offer a constructive space for dialogue, unity, and healing through culture. It serves as a living testament to the power of tradition to unite where divisions once existed and to heal where tensions once prevailed. Each year, it brings together Marsabit's fourteen diverse communities, celebrating their distinct identities while affirming their shared humanity. The festival reminds us that peace is not merely the absence of conflict, but the presence of mutual respect, trust, and collaboration among communities who share the same landscape, resources, and aspirations.

This year's theme, "*Celebrating Our Cultural Heritage, Rising in Unity: Strengthening Partnerships for Peace and Prosperity*," perfectly captures the essence of our vision. Through the celebration of our heritage, we reaffirm that culture is a powerful vehicle for development, a means to strengthen partnerships, promote tourism, inspire innovation, and foster understanding both locally and internationally. The Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival is, therefore, not only a cultural event but also a driver of social transformation, showcasing how unity in diversity can propel sustainable development. We extend our deepest appreciation to all our development partners, both local and international, whose continuous collaboration and shared commitment to Marsabit's development have helped shape the county's progress. Your partnership across humanitarian, environmental, cultural, and economic initiatives has played a vital role in enhancing livelihoods, building peace, and empowering communities across this vast and beautiful land. I also wish to acknowledge with deep gratitude the unwavering leadership and support of H.E. the Governor, Mohamed Ali Mohamed, whose vision continues to guide our efforts in promoting cultural heritage, peace, and prosperity in Marsabit County. To our esteemed visitors from across Kenya and around the world, I warmly welcome you to Loiyangalani. As you experience the rhythms, colours, and traditions of our people, may you discover the true essence of Marsabit: a land defined not by its challenges but by its strength, unity, and boundless promise. Welcome to Marsabit County, where the spirit of peace endures, culture thrives, and partnership lights the way to a shared future.

H.E. Solomon Gubo Riwe
Deputy Governor, Marsabit County

MESSAGE FROM THE CEC



It is with deep pride and profound joy that I welcome you to the 14th Edition of the Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival, held from 3rd to 7th December 2025 in the magical town of Loiyangalani, where the desert meets the Jade Sea, and where the spirit of Marsabit shines brightest. This year, under the resonant theme “Celebrating Our Cultural Heritage, Rising in Unity: Strengthening Partnerships for Peace and Prosperity,” we reaffirm the power of culture as the living pulse of our identity and the enduring foundation of our shared future. The festival is more than a gathering; it is a declaration that despite our diversity, we are one people bound by history, hope, and humanity. The Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival was conceived as a bridge across communities, across generations, and across borders. It provides a sacred space for reflection, reconnection, and renewal; a time when songs, dances, and stories merge to remind us that peace begins in the heart of culture. Here, we celebrate not just art and tradition, but also resilience, unity, and the wisdom of our ancestors who understood that the well-being of the community rests in the harmony of its people.

As we gather in Loiyangalani, we celebrate the vibrant mosaic of Marsabit’s fourteen cultural communities: the El-Molo, Borana, Rendille, Samburu, Gabra, Turkana, Dasanach, Burji, Garre, Sakuye, Waata, Gari, Somali, and Konso, each a unique thread in the grand tapestry of our heritage. Together, they represent centuries of knowledge, strength, and coexistence woven through the rhythms of survival in one of the most challenging yet magnificent landscapes on earth. This unity in diversity is not merely symbolic; it is the heartbeat of our county and the true spirit of the north. For the pastoral and agropastoral communities of Marsabit, this festival carries a deeper meaning. It is a mirror reflecting both our past and our possibilities, a recognition that while times have changed, our values of courage, hospitality, and communal solidarity remain timeless. In a world increasingly shaped by modernity, climate challenges, and shifting identities, this festival calls us to rediscover the wisdom of our roots



and reimagine a future where tradition and transformation walk hand in hand. Culturally, the festival revitalizes pride in our heritage and inspires our youth to see value in the languages, rituals, and artistic expressions of their ancestors. Socially, it strengthens intercommunity ties and sustains the peace that has become Marsabit’s most treasured asset. Economically, it opens new pathways for tourism, creative enterprise, and local empowerment, demonstrating that culture is not only who we are, but also what we can build from.

The rationale for this event lies in its purpose to celebrate identity, sustain peace, and ignite progress through culture. In the dance of the Rendille warriors, the chants of the Borana elders, the crafts of the Gabra women, and the songs of the El-Molo by the lake, we hear a single truth: that peace is possible, and prosperity is shared when communities rise together in understanding and respect. The implications for Marsabit are profound. This festival has become a platform where pastoral voices are heard, traditions preserved, and opportunities unlocked. It draws the world’s gaze to the beauty and potential of our northern frontier, positioning Marsabit as not only a cradle of culture but also a beacon of sustainable development, eco-tourism, and inclusive growth. To every visitor from Kenya and across the globe, we say *karibu sana*. You have come not only to witness culture but to experience the living essence of a people who continue to dance through the winds of change with dignity, unity, and joy. May you leave Loiyangalani inspired by the splendour of our landscapes, the richness of our traditions, and the warmth of our hospitality. Welcome to Marsabit, where the songs of the desert meet the rhythm of the lake, where cultures converge in celebration, and where peace and prosperity rise with every sunrise.

Dr. Armara M Galwab

*County Executive Committee Member
Department of Culture, Gender And Social Services*



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OFFICER



It is with immense joy, pride, and gratitude that I welcome you all to the 14th Edition of the Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival, taking place from 3rd to 7th December 2025 in the enchanting town of Loiyangalani, the heart where the desert meets the lake, and where the spirit of Marsabit comes alive. Guided by this year's unifying theme, "Celebrating Our Cultural Heritage, Rising in Unity: Strengthening Partnerships for Peace and Prosperity," this festival stands as a symbol of resilience, diversity, and shared destiny. It is a vibrant expression of who we are, a proud people whose traditions have withstood the test of time, whose songs still echo across the plains, and whose unity continues to shine as a beacon of hope in our nation. The Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival has grown to become a cornerstone of peace and cultural pride for our county. It offers a sacred space where all fourteen communities of Marsabit gather in a powerful celebration of heritage and harmony. Through the music, art, cuisine, and dances of these diverse communities, we are reminded that our differences are not divisions, but strengths that enrich our collective story. For the people of Marsabit, and particularly our pastoral and agropastoral communities, this festival is more than an annual celebration it is a reaffirmation of identity, pride, and progress. It nurtures peace by fostering dialogue and understanding among neighbours; it preserves traditions that risk fading in the face of modernization; and it opens doors for our youth and women to showcase their talents, crafts, and creativity to the world. In every way, the festival breathes life into our cultural economy, inspires unity, and strengthens the fabric of our society.

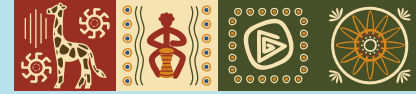
I extend my heartfelt appreciation to H.E. the Governor, Mohamed Ali Mohamed, and H.E. the Deputy Governor, Solomon Gubo Riwe, for their unwavering support, strategic guidance, and encouragement throughout the preparation process. Their steadfast leadership and belief in the power of culture have made this milestone possible. Equally, I wish to

sincerely recognize the Planning Committee, the Department of Culture, Gender, and Social Services staff, and our on-ground festival coordination teams who have worked tirelessly, often behind the scenes, holding countless meetings, consultations, and preparations to bring this event to life. Your dedication, creativity, and teamwork have transformed a vision into a reality that the entire county can be proud of. The success of this festival is a reflection of the collaborative spirit that defines Marsabit, a spirit built on dialogue, respect, and shared purpose. Together, we are proving that culture is not just a celebration of the past but a pathway to a peaceful, inclusive, and prosperous future. To our esteemed guests, visitors, and friends from across Kenya and beyond, thank you for joining us in this celebration of unity and cultural pride. As the colours of Marsabit fill the desert skies and the rhythms of Lake Turkana echo through the night, may you experience the heartbeat of our people, resilient, welcoming, and full of hope. Welcome to Loiyangalani, welcome to Marsabit, where heritage thrives, unity endures, and peace continues to light our path forward.

Annamaria Denge
Chief Officer
Department of Culture,
Gender And Social Services



PREAMBLES



The annual hosting of the Marsabit Lake Turkana International Cultural Festival is a vital celebration that affirms the identity and resilience of the diverse communities of Marsabit County. Established in 2008 and now embraced by all 14 ethnic groups in Marsabit County, the festival has grown into a dynamic platform for showcasing and preserving unique cultural traditions that are at risk of fading in a rapidly changing world. By bringing together various communities to share their customs, attire, crafts, music, and dances, the festival serves as a living archive of Marsabit's rich and diverse heritage, reinforcing the significance of cultural preservation as a pillar of collective identity.

This celebration is not only an expression of cultural pride but also a key instrument in fostering unity, peace, and cohesion across Marsabit County. In a region historically characterized by ethnic diversity and pastoral livelihoods, the festival cultivates a spirit of togetherness and mutual appreciation. Through

shared cultural expression, communities build bridges of understanding that transcend differences, thereby nurturing a peaceful and integrated society. The festival stands as a symbol of harmony and inclusivity, earning national and international recognition for its role in promoting social stability.

Beyond cultural celebration, the festival strategically positions Marsabit as a hub for local, regional, and global collaboration. It invites stakeholders from across Kenya and beyond to engage in meaningful cultural exchange and economic partnership. The event supports social and economic growth by promoting eco-tourism, creating markets for local artisans, and encouraging investment in creative and cultural industries. In doing so, it not only celebrates the past but also catalyzes future development, making the Marsabit Lake Turkana International Cultural Festival a cornerstone of the county's social, economic, and cultural transformation.



INTRODUCTION



Launched in 2008 by the visionary ELMOSARETU Group, representing the El-Molo, Samburu, Rendille, and Turkana communities, the Marsabit Lake Turkana International Cultural Festival has grown from a local celebration into one of Kenya's most iconic cultural showcases. Initially supported by the German Embassy, the festival is now proudly spearheaded by the County Government of Marsabit, bringing together all 14 of the county's diverse ethnic communities under one unifying banner of peace, diversity, and shared heritage.

Recognized globally for its contribution to cultural harmony, the festival was nominated for the prestigious TAGORE International Award in 2015, affirming its role as a bridge for unity and understanding. Every edition bursts with colour and rhythm, traditional dances, art, crafts, music, and cuisine, weaving a powerful story of identity, resilience, and celebration.

Set against the breathtaking backdrop of Lake Turkana, the world's largest desert lake and a UNESCO World Heritage

Site, the festival offers more than cultural immersion; it's an encounter with nature's majesty and humanity's roots. Surrounded by the Sibiloi, Central Island, and South Island National Parks, the region teems with wildlife, archaeological wonders, and stunning volcanic landscapes. From flamingo-dotted islands to ancient fossils and the nearby Lake Turkana Wind Power Project, this frontier is both a cradle of civilization and a beacon of sustainable progress.

A journey to Loiyangalani, the festival's host town, is like stepping into a living museum, where tradition meets transformation. Here, herders guide their animals across sweeping plains as visitors marvel at the timeless beauty of Marsabit's cultures and landscapes. This fusion of ecological wonder, cultural pride, and modern innovation makes the Marsabit Lake Turkana International Cultural Festival not just an event but a celebration of Kenya's soul, a must-attend experience for anyone seeking the true spirit of diversity and discovery.



ABOUT MARSABIT COUNTY

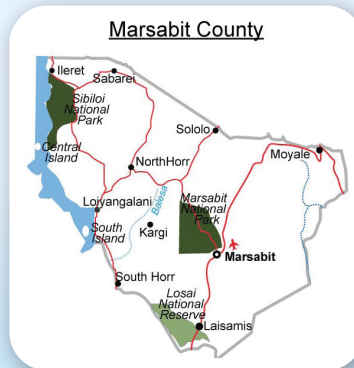


Marsabit County is one of 47 counties of the Republic of Kenya created under the 2010 Constitution. It has an international boundary with Ethiopia to the North, borders Lake Turkana to the West, Samburu County to the South and Wajir and Isiolo Counties to the East. It lies between latitude 02o 45o North and 04o 27o North and longitude 37o 57o East and 39o 21o East.

The County covers an area of 70,961 km² and is divided into four constituencies Moyale, North Horr, Saku and Laisamis and has 20 electoral wards. The county has two major towns Moyale and Marsabit and three urban centres namely Sololo, Loiyangalani and Laisamis.

Most of the county constitutes an extensive plain lying between 300m and 900m above the sea level, sloping gently towards the south east. The plain is bordered to the west and north by hills and mountain ranges and is broken by volcanic cones and calderas.

Marsabit County is endowed with beautiful scenic site such as Marsabit National park which is famed for its indigenous tropical rain forest, the large herds of elephants, buffaloes



and other wild species. The internationally famous elephant Ahmed lived within Marsabit Montane Forest. The life size statue of Ahmed can be viewed at National Museum of Kenya.

There are some amazing crater lakes, such as Lake Paradise and Gof Bongole and senic craters like Gof Chobba, Gof Aredo and Gof Ogicho. Other famous sites includes Sibiloi National Park and Koobi which is famous as a prehistoric site famously recognized as “the cradle of mankind” due to unsurpassed

fossil remains dating millions of years back, it is a UNESCO world heritage site.

Lake Turkana also known as the Jade Sea is the largest desert lake in the world and is also found in Marasbit: 75% of this permanent desert lake is within Marsabit County.

The amazing Kalacha Springs, found in Chalbi Desert offers an endless supply of fresh water all year round and is a spectacular site given the desert and sand that sorrounds these spring. Chalbi desert which is the only true desert in East Africa is a unique sandy expanse of dried mud (probably the product an extinct ancient lake).

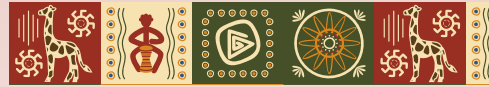




OBJECTIVES OF THE FESTIVAL

- 1 Celebrate and Preserve Cultural Heritage**— Marsabit County's rich cultural diversity should be showcased while safeguarding traditions from the growing challenges of cultural erosion due to evolving social and economic changes.
- 2 Foster Unity, Peace, and Cohesion** – Strengthen cultural integration, societal harmony, and peaceful coexistence among the county's 14 communities, promoting mutual understanding and collaboration.
- 3 Position Marsabit as a Premier Eco-Tourism Destination**— Highlight the region's vast potential for sustainable tourism through its pristine landscapes, wildlife, and historical sites, attracting local and international visitors.
- 4 Enhance Local, Regional, and Global Partnerships** – Create avenues for cultural exchange, economic development, and diplomatic relations, fostering stronger ties between Marsabit County and the broader national and international community.
- 5 Encourage Socio-Economic Growth Through Culture** – Utilize cultural expression as a driver for entrepreneurship, empowering local artisans, performers, and businesses through expanded opportunities in tourism, trade, and investment.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND IMPACT



Immediate Outcomes:

- Strengthened inter-community relations and peace networks.
- Increased cultural pride and identity, particularly among youth and women.
- Enhanced visibility of Marsabit as a peaceful and culturally vibrant destination.



Long-Term Impact:

- Institutionalization of the festival as a premier peace and tourism event.
- Growth in cultural tourism and local economic activities.
- Strengthened community resilience and shared identity.



JUSTIFICATION



The Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival (MLTCF) stands as one of Northern Kenya's most powerful symbols of unity, resilience, and shared prosperity. Hosted annually by the County Government of Marsabit in collaboration with development partners, including LTWP, KenGen, FH/K, PACIDA, CIFA, CARITAS, CONCERN, SIF, SND, ALCHA, RED CROSS, MWADO, and MERCY CORPS, alongside key stakeholders such as banking institutions, the national administration, the Kenya Wildlife Service, the National Museums of Kenya, and the Kenya Tourism Board, the festival has evolved into a cornerstone of peacebuilding, cultural preservation, and economic transformation in the region.

Since its inception, the MLTCF has demonstrated that culture can be a powerful tool for social cohesion and inclusive growth. It has provided a peaceful platform where Marsabit's diverse ethnic communities come together to celebrate their identities, traditions, and shared humanity. In a region historically marked by resource-based tensions and ethnic divisions, the festival has emerged as a catalyst for *peace and harmony*, fostering dialogue, understanding, and mutual respect among communities. This cultural convergence continues to strengthen the social fabric and deepen intercommunal trust, laying a strong foundation for long-term stability and coexistence.

Beyond its peace dividends, the MLTCF has also become a hub for innovation and competition through the revival of *traditional and modern sports*. Events such as the camel race, Moran race, and boat competitions along the shores of Lake Turkana infuse the festival with excitement while preserving Marsabit's unique cultural heritage. These activities not only engage youth in constructive expression but also promote inter-community participation, cultural pride, and tourism appeal.

Economically, the festival serves as a major driver of *local development*. The surge in demand for accommodation, food, transport, entertainment, and crafts during the event



injects much-needed revenue into the local economy. Small businesses, artisans, and women-led enterprises thrive as they showcase and sell their products to both local and international visitors. The ripple effect extends far beyond the festival period—stimulating entrepreneurship, encouraging creativity, and enhancing livelihoods across Marsabit's urban and rural communities.

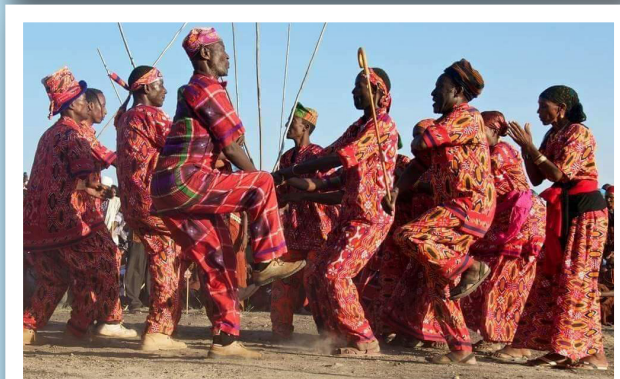


Moreover, the MLTCF has become a vital platform for *unlocking investment opportunities* in the region. By attracting diverse development partners, private investors, and government institutions, the festival highlights Marsabit's potential in sectors such as renewable energy, eco-tourism, and cultural industries. Its strategic positioning near Lake Turkana and the expansive wind corridors has particularly drawn attention to sustainable energy projects like wind power, opening new avenues for collaboration and long-term growth.

The festival's *tourism impact* is equally profound. By showcasing the beauty, diversity, and authenticity of Marsabit's people and landscapes, it continues to position the county as a must-visit cultural destination in Kenya's northern frontier. Visitors drawn to the area's music, dance, cuisine, and breathtaking scenery become ambassadors for Marsabit, spreading positive narratives and encouraging repeat tourism that sustains local income.

Crucially, the MLTCF leaves a *sustained post-festival legacy*. Long after the festivities end, the relationships built, the markets opened, and the visibility gained continue to transform lives. Tourists, investors, and development actors who experience Marsabit during the festival often return to initiate projects, partnerships, or social ventures that contribute to community growth and resilience.

In essence, the Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival is far more than an annual celebration it is a transformative engine for peace, culture, and prosperity. It embodies the spirit of unity in diversity, showcasing how heritage can drive progress, build trust, and inspire hope in one of Kenya's most culturally rich and environmentally dynamic regions. Continued support and partnership in this initiative are therefore critical to sustaining its impact and expanding its contribution to inclusive and sustainable development in Marsabit County and beyond.



LOI YAN GAL ANI



FESTIVAL SITE

Perched on the southeastern shores of the stunning Lake Turkana, about 700 km from Nairobi, Loiyangalani is a hidden gem in Kenya's northern frontier. This desert oasis blends breathtaking beauty with rich cultural heritage, making it the perfect stage for the Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival.

Surrounded by the ancient villages of the El-Molo, Turkana communities, and Rendille communities, Loiyangalani offers visitors a rare opportunity to step into living history. Here, tradition thrives unbroken, and every drumbeat, dance, and craft tells the story of survival, resilience, and harmony with nature. Upon arrival, visitors are instantly captivated by the surreal beauty of Lake Turkana, famously known as the *Jade Sea* for its shimmering emerald waters. The contrast between the turquoise lake and the rugged, sun-scorched desert hills creates a spectacle unlike any other, a scene both haunting and breathtaking in its majesty.



Though its landscapes inspire awe, Loiyangalani remains one of Kenya's best-kept secrets. Its cultural and historical treasures are vast yet largely untold. The town is home to a mosaic of ethnic groups, including El-Molo, Turkana, Rendille, Samburu, and others, whose ways of life have withstood the test of time. Visitors can immerse themselves in authentic cultural encounters, experiencing traditional homesteads, songs, dances, and oral histories that have been preserved for generations.

Beyond its cultural richness, Loiyangalani is also a site of profound archaeological and historical significance. The region hosts remarkable rock art and ancient carvings, echoing the beliefs, rituals, and daily life of early human societies that once flourished here. These artistic relics, etched into the desert stone, make Loiyangalani a living museum of human civilization and a vital link to Africa's prehistoric past.

As day gives way to night, Loiyangalani transforms into a theatre of celestial wonder. The sunset over Lake Turkana ignites the sky in hues of gold and crimson, mirrored by the calm waters below. Moments later, the moon ascends above the surrounding hills, casting a silvery glow across the desert plain. The spectacle continues through the night, moonlight and starlight dancing over the lake, culminating in the serene beauty of dawn as the sun rises once more.

Loiyangalani is more than a destination; it is an experience that stirs the soul. Its silence speaks of ancient times, its winds whisper of forgotten civilizations, and its people embody the living spirit of Kenya's northern heritage. Hosting the Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival here is not only a celebration of cultural diversity but also a powerful tribute to a place where history, humanity, and nature converge in perfect harmony.





WHY LOIYANGALANI FOR THE MARSABIT LAKE TURKANA CULTURAL FESTIVAL?



Loiyangalani, nestled along the shimmering shores of Lake Turkana, the world's largest desert lake, stands as a living testament to cultural richness, natural beauty, and historical depth. This enchanting oasis in northern Kenya offers more than just a venue; it embodies the very essence of unity in diversity that the Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival seeks to celebrate.

The town's vibrant cultural mosaic, where 14 ethnic communities coexist harmoniously, makes it the ideal stage for showcasing Marsabit County's heritage. Here, visitors witness firsthand the colourful dances, traditional music, and age-old craftsmanship that define the soul of northern Kenya. The festival transforms Loiyangalani into a meeting point of cultures and an open space where traditions are not only preserved but proudly shared, fostering mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence among communities.

Beyond culture, Loiyangalani is a gateway to discovery. Its breathtaking landscapes, where desert meets lake and rugged hills embrace turquoise waters, offer unmatched eco-tourism potential. By hosting the festival here, Marsabit County amplifies its commitment to sustainable tourism, local enterprise growth, and environmental conservation. The event attracts thousands of local and international visitors each year, boosting local livelihoods while shining a spotlight on the region's untapped tourism potential.

Loiyangalani's historical and ecological significance further cements its place as the festival's home. It is a place where ancient stories meet modern aspirations, where communities continue to draw strength from their past as they chart a new path for the future.

As we prepare for the 14th edition of the Marsabit Lake Turkana Cultural Festival in December 2025, we invite all Kenyans and global friends to Loiyangalani, a hidden jewel where culture, nature, and history converge to create an unforgettable celebration of unity, resilience, and pride.



RICH CULTURE





LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN MARSABIT COUNTY



Marsabit County is a living mosaic of cultures, home to 14 indigenous ethnic communities, each with its own distinct traditions, languages, and ways of life. From the El-Molo, Kenya's smallest and most ancient tribe, to the Borana, Rendille, Samburu, Turkana, and Gabra, Marsabit's people embody a deep heritage of resilience and unity. Their diversity weaves together one of the most vibrant cultural tapestries in Kenya, offering a rare glimpse into traditions that have withstood the test of time.

