



"When we asked the women of Nooriro what they hoped for from the new well, they bubbled over with plans for what they will do with the time they will save."

WATER IS LIFE KENYA >>> Summer 2023

STAYING CONNECTED

Bringing clean water & hope to over 80,000 people every day

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I have been asking myself, how do people change?

Ultimately, the work that Water is Life Kenya does is about human development. Our clean water, sanitation, and hygiene projects help people meet their basic needs for water *and* good health *and* improve their lives. We train and give loans through Livestock as a Business so people can build on their traditional ways of livestock keeping to increase their income, which supports reliable clean water supplies and other development like education and building a resilient business. Behavior change is key here. But the question still remains: *how* do people change?

Our Hope for Widows (HFW) program aims to support widowed women change from being impoverished, marginalized, and dependent on others to confident, self-reliant, financially-able women. The Widows Pilot Program's participants have displayed a wide range of progress. Their savings, income, and ability to feed their families have all improved.

But when operating a business with a small amount of capital, the distance between a functioning business and a collapsed business is painfully small. When children came home from boarding school between school terms for their three-week holiday, women used their money to feed their hungry, growing kids during those days, drawing on their small reserves, and eating up the business capital. Businesses foundered.



Widows Ntaine (left) and Emily (right) at the HFW Goats & Grants Ceremony in November. Since then, these two have consistently been among the most successful small business owners.

One goal in particular needs a different approach: having a business strong enough to stand even when high demands strain family resources. This was a stated goal for all the women.

So, what is the solution? How can women change and achieve their goals? Is there a way they can use their resources more effectively? One thing is for certain: they are not alone anymore. They have us, and they have you. Together, we will work with these women and keep brainstorming to help them change this pattern of frequent business collapse. Together, change *is* possible.

Thank you for empowering others to change,

Joyce Tannian

NOIRO PROGRESS

By the first half of June, we expect the new borehole at Noiro to be up and running! The concrete foundation for the water storage tank is in the process of setting, and other structures like latrines and water points are being built. Meanwhile, community members are enjoying the wages they are being paid to do manual labor at the site. Because of their hard work, they will also feel a strong sense of ownership for their new well!



Our fearless leader & Co-Founder, Joseph Larasha, inspects the new masonry water tank at Noiro alongside the chief (bottom left). In just a few weeks, abundant, clean water will be available here, making Noiro WILK's 27th completed WASH project.

The area has become green, thanks to a few heavy rainfalls. In Kenya, when you add rain to the fertile soil and the strong equatorial sun, new plant life bursts forth in just a few days. Noiro is also full of people returning home with their surviving livestock after more than a year away. Life is slightly less stressful after a nearly 3-year-long drought.

On June 18th, our partners and donors from the Lions Club will join us in celebrating the opening of the well. We will also distribute food to the community as part of the activities funded by Lion Paul and the Lions Club International Foundation Grant. Partners TRULY make the world go round, and we are so grateful for the amazing generosity of the Lions team.

When we asked the women of Noiro what they hoped for from the new well, they bubbled over with plans for what they will do with the time they will get back when they no longer have to go far for water. They plan to set up small food kiosks at the borehole site to sell to borehole users. They also plan to sell beads on market day in Maili Tisa. Then, with the money they earn, they will build a nursery school. They are looking forward to many improvements in their lives. They remind us that, truthfully, Water is Life!

SPOTLIGHT: OUR FAITHFUL MISSION PARTNERS

WAYNE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Wayne Presbyterian Church in Wayne, PA, has supported us as their mission partner, contributing more than \$30,000 to WILK projects over the past 7 years. On May 7th, WILK, hosted by David Webster, visited this dynamic congregation to update them on how their support is bringing clean water and a better life to communities in Kenya, like Empalakai and the Ilkisonko Boys High School students, faculty, and neighbors. Church members bought Mother's Day gifts and other goodies at our beaded handicrafts table and donated cows and goats to needy families through our "Restock and Restore" Campaign. It's always great saying hello to our faithful friends at Wayne Pres!

We love *all* of our mission partners and are currently seeking partnership opportunities with more churches and groups. To learn more about our mission partner program, opportunities, and offerings, or to inquire about working together, visit waterislifekenya.org/mission.



We take Beaded Handicrafts wherever we go! These beautiful handmade items bring livelihoods to women, hope to families, and joy to those who buy them. We would love to bring our set up to your church, festival, fair, or event.



Sign up for WILK Wednesday, our Bimonthly Email Newsletter at waterislifekenya.org/wednesday

SHARING OUR LOSS



Dorcas Mutero and her beautiful smile.

I want to share news about an important member of the WILK family, Dorcas Mutero.

She went where few of her peers went. She came to the U.S. with WILK Co-Founder Joseph Larasha in 2018 to give a TEDx talk called Education Has No Age (you can watch it on YouTube). The food in the U.S. was strange for her, and it took us a minute to find something she liked. Pizza was

a “no,” hamburgers a “yes!” She thought it funny that Americans put ice in their drinks. “Ice kelele,” she and Larasha called it: “noisy ice.”

Dorcas was a part of our LAB program with her group, Imisigiyo Women’s Livestock Keepers. They left the program in 2017. She hustled to get a new LAB group together so that we would train the next batch of Imisigiyo women. In 2021, Dorcas went to Dubai to represent Kenyan Maasai beadwork at an international exhibition. Together with Gitu Barua and students from the University of Delaware, she worked on a fundraising project to get reusable sanitary towels for girls. She was a courageous, determined woman.

The 2.5-year drought put an extraordinary burden on her, and when she came to find me at Imurtot this past January while we were working with Engineers without Borders on their rainwater harvesting system, she hadn’t been feeling well. As usual, her concern was for her children. Having lost all their cows in the drought, she wondered how she would get her daughter, Hellen, to high school. I told her we would try to find a sponsor. We did (thanks, Kim, and your book group!) and Dorcas was relieved.

Still, her suffering intensified. Her illness weakened her and, finally, was too much. She died on April 17. She is now without pain or worry.

May she rest in peace, and may her family and all those who love her receive comfort. We will always miss her and remember her extraordinary love, determination, and courage.



Dorcas, Joyce's parents Beatrix and Francis Tannian, Joyce, and Joseph Larasha enjoy time together in 2018.



WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

Every year, our donors inspire us to reach new heights. Our new legacy societies seek to offer special acknowledgement to our most special donors. To learn more, visit

waterislifekenya.org/legacy

HONORING THOSE WHO DIG DEEP TO BUILD UP



A status reserved for our highest annual givers of \$1,000 and above, the Kilimanjaro Club seeks to climb the mountain of generosity to invest whole-heartedly in WILK's mission. We are proud to have over 70 active club members.

INTRODUCING OUR BEQUEST SOCIETY



The peak of Mr. Kilimanjaro is called *Uhuru*, which means "freedom." Certain donors have shared with us that they want to honor WILK beyond their earthly life by including us in their will. We are proud to honor these exceptionally generous donors through the **Uhuru Society**. Learn more at waterislifekenya.org/legacy.

DONATION CORNER

4 WAYS TO GIVE

DONATE

- 1** Send us a check payable to Water is Life Kenya.
- 2** Donate online using this QR code or by visiting waterislifekenya.org.
- 3** Give monthly on our online giving platform. Just click "monthly" under donation frequency.
- 4** Match your gift by exploring your employer's corporate matching program.



BEADS BONANZA AND WHAT IT MEANS

During our surge of spring sale events, customers explored our collection of Water is Life Beaded Handicrafts. They were enamored, not only by the beauty of the products but by the hard work that went into them. Even more, they love how buying these products directly supports the artisans who make them, including more than **100 families**. Women artisans love it because the money they receive from beadwork is *their* money. The more we sell, the more income they have!

And, let's not forget, **YOU** look great wearing these beautiful things! When you wear these unique, hand-made pieces or give them as gifts, they always start a meaningful conversation. These conversations open windows into other people's experiences, build empathy, and cultivate love and understanding.

To view our collection of Beaded Handicrafts, visit our website and click “**Shop.**” Contact us to inquire about having these handicrafts for sale at your event or group.



314 E Main St., Suite 2 | Newark, DE 19711
(302) 894-7335 | 501(c)3 nonprofit
EIN: 26-3185829
info@waterislifekenya.org
@waterislifekenya



waterislifekenya.org

LIVESTOCK AS A BUSINESS REBOOT

This spring it finally rained in Kenya after a 2.5-year drought. This gave us the hope that we could restart our LAB program, and gave LAB group members the hope that their livestock would recover. To help them get back on track, we ran a Restock & Restore campaign. We encouraged people to donate cows and goats to our LAB group members—generating nearly \$5,000, which will be used to purchase 25 cows and 30 goats!

And the best part? Every person who donated an animal received a commemorative cow or goat postcard designed by our very own volunteer youth artist, Kai Li! We were so happy to share her creations with others and bring smiles to the faces of everyone who supported our LAB members.

When LAB Reboots later this year, you can expect slightly stronger livestock herds after the rains, as well as a renewed emphasis on pasture conservation and regeneration, as we work with our livestock farmers to improve drought resilience.



Joyce with Kai Li and her cow and goat creations! Thanks to Kai Li and also those who donated, our LAB groups will be receiving new animals and revived hope this summer.