



Group 3 Hope for Widows participants smile in thanking at their Goats & Grants ceremony in September with WILK Field Officer, Cate Olegei (orange), in the center.

WATER IS LIFE KENYA



Fall 2024

STAYING CONNECTED

Here's what we accomplished together in our busiest year ever.

Letter from the Director A Virtuous Cycle

Dear Friends,

I asked myself, "Is there a term for a process that generates something positive and keeps generating positive outcomes, both forward and backward?"

Yes! It's called a **virtuous cycle**. Let me explain.

In developing the Hope for Widows (HFW) Program, we reused successful content and methods from our Livestock as a Business (LAB) Program as a foundation. Specifically, we held trainings in the widows' villages and began each program activity by having the ladies share their stories and what they were hoping for.

Next, since the widows are Maasai livestock keepers and we give them goats, we reused our livestock disease prevention lesson so they can keep their herds healthy. We also taught our business skills lessons, including how to calculate profit and choose the right products to sell in their market.

After 2 groups of widows passed through HFW training, we noticed that this program was extraordinarily successful at increasing individual incomes. Each month, women increased their household income and savings. For our LAB



Our WILK Team at the Lositeti Opening Ceremony (August). From left to right: Panaian (project contractor), Cate, Leonard, Nelson, Larasha, and Joyce.

participants, who typically manage money in groups, we noticed a gap in applying these lessons to personal finances.

We then thought, "How can we cycle this individual success back into the LAB Program to make it even more successful and economically beneficial to individuals?"

Your support is the engine for this virtuous cycle. YOU make it all happen!

Seasons Greetings to you and yours,

Joyce Tannian

Director & Co-Founder

LOSITETI BOREHOLE OPENING CEREMONY

On August 28, we handed over the Lositeti borehole to the community. The project has been more than a year in the making, so there was much to celebrate.

This deep borehole was made possible by generous funding from the Raskob Foundation and the Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation, as well as a partnership project with Rotary District 7630. Led by our friend Jerry Bilton of Newark Rotary, nine partner clubs across the district raised \$16,350 to furnish the water pump, solar power, and electric fence at Lositeti. This system pumps water uphill through a 2.5 kilometer pipeline to a 13,000 liter holding tank. This is what it looks like to put "Service above Self" at a global scale.

Before the ceremony, the final bit of construction—a water basin for nearby elephants—was installed. They need to drink, too!

The community has been busy utilizing its new water source in multiple beneficial ways. They've wholeheartedly embraced the idea of "Water is Wealth," a lesson we teach at our annual Water Management Committee (WMC) training, by planting a community vegetable garden below their protected solar panels.



Larasha, Joyce, and local leaders opening the Lositeti borehole.



Joyce in the Lositeti vegetable garden!



Water point demo.



Healthy cows drinking at Lositeti.

The availability of local, clean water will support women and children. The obvious benefits include reducing illnesses and improving the health of both people and their livestock. Having a close, dependable water source empowers women, allowing them more time to generate income, support their families, and reduce the fear of devastation from future droughts.

We're ecstatic that our friends in Lositeti finally have access to clean water, and we can't wait to see how they transform their community with this new resource.

GROUNDBREAKING IN OLMOTI

Global Linkages, Inc. (GL) is a management consulting firm that develops partnerships between US travelers and the African continent. During an East African tour in 2022, a partnership was established with members of Olmoti, a Maasai community near Amboseli National Park. Together with WILK, GL decided a borehole would be the best long-term way to empower Olmoti.

*Thanks to the hard work of the Global Linkages Fundraising Ambassadors and their community of donors, **\$80,000 of their \$100,000 goal** has been raised to bring clean water to Olmoti!*



In late June, we drilled the Olmoti Community Borehole.



Drilling – A Volcanic Disruption

With a strong spring fundraising push, we were able to break ground in Olmoti on June 30. The conditions were less than ideal. Olmoti sits on a volcanic formation, so the rock is porous. During drilling, compressed air forces rock cuttings into the rock pores, followed by periodic collapses of the accumulated rock. All of this makes for tricky drilling. Fortunately we have a technically strong drilling team, and the driller overcame the challenges by installing additional steel casings to protect the borehole from collapse.

After 50 meters of nerve-racking drilling, we hit abundant first water. In total, we drilled 95 meters (312 feet) to tap into the lower aquifer so Olmoti's borehole won't run dry. We all exhaled deeply when it was successfully finished!

Test pumping followed a week later. The pump ran for 24 hours at 15,000 liters/hour (3,963 gallons), and the water level didn't change. This tells us the water will flow consistently while not depleting the supply. Water quality analysis revealed perfect quality water. It is delicious!

PLANNING FOR PASTURE

Planning for Pasture, our newest program, is off to a strong start. We're supporting local pasture management efforts around Amboseli National Park by partnering with 11 local Grazing Management Committees (GMCs), each representing a different zone.

When we asked the GMCs what they needed, they initially requested motorcycles to monitor grazing zones, seeing themselves as "grass police." However, we realized a greater priority was teaching them how to train their communities in grass conservation, something they hadn't yet done. By focusing on a shared vision—**healthy grass to support livestock**—we aimed to create a sustainable, long-term impact.

We started by training the GMCs in grazing management and how to share these practices with their communities. Building cooperation between leaders and members was crucial, as effective pasture management requires everyone working together. During community trainings, GMCs led lessons emphasizing the economic benefits of adopting new grazing practices and helped farmers understand the goal of a No-Death-During-Drought area (which we called a "**3D Free Zone**"). This includes selling cows on time, something Maasai are resistant to do.

Scan to hear Joyce share a Planning for Pasture update.



Larasha leading a training in Olmoti.

WILK's Co-Founder, Joseph Larasha, challenged farmers with a key question: "Do you work for your cows, or do your cows work for you?" In Maasai culture, status is tied to livestock, and 90% of the region's income depends on it. However, poor rangeland management and resistance to selling cows during the 2021-2023 drought led to widespread livestock deaths, highlighting the urgent need for better pasture management.

We've trained over 2,700 farmers, with thousands attending sessions led by WILK, Larasha, and the GMCs. The lessons were shared with friends and family, amplifying the impact. The results are already clear: pasture is still available now, whereas in previous years, they were depleted.

Planning for Pasture works! Cows are healthy, families are prospering, and farmers now see that healthy grass leads to healthy livestock, stable incomes, and a more resilient ecosystem. Better pasture also strengthens wildlife, boosts tourism, and increases local prosperity.

GL DONORS: JOIN US FOR A FINAL PUSH WEBINAR ON DECEMBER 2, 2024 @ 7pm EST

Up Next at Olmoti

The next phase of this project is **construction**. The borehole was drilled in a bushy area frequented by elephants (who also love fresh water). To keep the area undisturbed, the borehole site will only have a pump house and solar panels protected by an electric fence, with a nearby water basin supplying water to elephants. The water will be piped 500 meters out of the bush to a holding tank, community water point, latrines, and livestock troughs.

We're so grateful for our partnership with Global Linkages and the ambassadors who've dedicated so much time and effort to fundraise. They are **only \$20,000 away** from their goal of raising \$100,000 by Giving Tuesday (December 3).

There's still time to help! You can support the Final Push by making a donation via the enclosed blue envelope. You can also join us for our Global Linkages **Final Push Webinar** on Monday, December 2nd at 7pm (scan the QR code to register). Donate at waterislifekenya.org/global.



The Olmoti community celebrating clean water during Test Pumping.

SCAN TO REGISTER FOR FINAL PUSH WEBINAR



Global Linkages Ambassador Spotlight



Amazing Ambassadors! To raise funds, David (left) swam 101 laps, Pat (center) walked over 150 miles, & Vivian (right) partnered with local businesses. We are so proud of their efforts!

Feeling Lucky & Blessed

Miss the concert?
Scan to listen!



On Saturday, October 5, in conjunction with Newark United Methodist Church, Joyce performed **Lucky & Blessed: A Musical Gathering** with pianist Rob Kennan. Joyce sang in joyful celebration of WILK's recent accomplishments and, in turn, bolstered the spirits of all who attended.

The first act featured Austrian and German classics from Franz Schubert and Johannes Brahms, and a rendition of "It Might As Well Be Spring" by Rodgers and Hammerstein. Then, Joyce sang a set of mixed musical genres, including the traditional Swahili song "Malaika" (which means angel and is a favorite of our Kenyan friends), an Italian operatic piece, and a jazz number. To close the act, the crowd sang along to the gospel song "Not Lucky, I'm Loved."

After intermission, Joyce returned with a set of show tunes from American musicals that are among her favorites to perform. Then, before the concert's conclusion, she took a moment to share about the work our Kenyan team has been accomplishing with Maasai farmers, widows, and grass managers—the work that you, our WILK donors, make possible.

The show ended with everyone singing together to "Put a Little Love in Your Heart." It was hopeful and inspiring, a call for peace in our world that has so many challenges but still so much love.

At the reception, one audience member said to Joyce, "That was so impactful! I really needed some positivity right now."

Photos by Paula Persoleo & Maddi Ramirez

Join us to hear WILK Program updates at our



GIVING TUESDAY WEBINAR

Register Here

Giving Tuesday,
December 3, 2024
7:00pm EST



waterislifekenyana.org/webinar

HONORING THE KILIMANJARO CLUB

A status reserved for our highest annual givers of \$1,000 and above, the **Kilimanjaro Club** honors those who invest whole-heartedly in Water is Life Kenya's mission. We are proud to have **over 100** active club members!

To thank Kilimanjaro Club members, we held an exclusive reception before the Lucky & Blessed concert on October 5. Members mingled over food and drinks and browsed Beaded Handicrafts. Joyce even surprised them by singing a song before the concert!

At the reception, WILK's Aaron Lemma and volunteer KaiLi Jackson handed out commemorative pins to club members. They also gifted cards designed by KaiLi to acknowledge that WILK will be planting trees in honor of every club member. This special grove will be a part of the Olmoti Community Borehole and will face Mount Kilimanjaro. We wanted to say thank you in a special way that will connect our most faithful donors to our work in Kenya.

Just as climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro takes a team, so, too, does establishing support for our communities in Kenya. That's what the Kilimanjaro Club does, year by year. We're awed and humbled by their generous spirits which allow us to be innovative and impact more Maasai families every year!



Kilimanjaro Climbers enjoying their reception.



Right: KaiLi's most recent creation showing a Kenyan family growing a tree.



Aaron & KaiLi leading the pin & tree-planting ceremony.



Board President Dr. Francis Tannian chatting with friends.



THE
Join KILIMANJARO CLUB

Learn more & see our donor list at waterislifekenya.org/legacy

WILK-TEC EMBARKS ON NEW PROJECT

In September, six engineers from our volunteer engineering committee, Water is Life Kenya - Technical Engineering Committee (WILK-TEC), traveled to Kenya to complete their next rainwater harvesting project in Inchakita. This is the first project completed under the group's new name and official merge with WILK.

Water harvesting systems are beneficial in many ways. They're less expensive and quicker to install than boreholes. Since they're based on capturing "free" rainwater in tanks, there are no water fees to use them. With enough rain, these systems can sustain smaller groups of people (such as a school population) with minimal maintenance.

This water harvesting system will support Inchakita Primary School, which has about 350 students and staff members. We're so thankful for our relationship with these engineers who've



*Top: Doug & Bill inspect the gutter.
Left: John & Emily connecting the tank.
Right: Doug & Leonard inspect the First Flush system, WILK-TEC's own adapted design.*

made a commitment to bring water to Kenyan schools. Not only did they give up vacation time to volunteer, they also fundraised their own project.

The team even had time to hand out goats at our Hope for Widows' Goats & Grants ceremony (see page 6)! Thank you to Kim, John, Emily, Doug, Bill, and Carley for your generosity!

HOPE FOR WIDOWS

We've entered the third year of our innovative Hope for Widows (HFW) Program. Begun in 2022, HFW came out of a response to help widowed Kenyan women who face immense odds due to disenfranchisement and gender inequality. Over the past two years, more than 100 women have been trained through our program.

Goats, Grants, & Graduation for Groups 1 & 2

In August, our HFW participants celebrated at the Goats, Grants, & Graduation Ceremony. The first group of widows, who entered the program in 2022, worked together to plan the ceremony. They met every day to decide who would be responsible for the food, equipment, and setup so that everything would be perfect.



Presenting the Graduates: Group 1 Widows!

Around 800-900 people were in attendance. The graduating widows took pride in planning the event. They wore yellow shukas with matching shoes and belts. As a symbol of their graduation, they each received a certificate, a photo of their group, and a personalized shopping bag.



Group 1 widow, Manae, receiving her graduation certificate.

The second group of widows, who wore green shukas at the ceremony, received their second grants of \$150. This helped them buy stock to boost their businesses.

In the HFW program, grants of \$150 dollars and 3 goats—2 females and 1 male—are given to each woman. As their goats get pregnant and give birth, their herds grow. Last year, a tradition began where each widow gives their first baby goat to a needy friend. Here, Group 1 and 2 ladies gifted 20 baby goats to needy neighbors. Group 3 widows were also present, looking on to see what's in store for them.



Widows from all 3 groups celebrate together at the Goats, Grants, & Graduation Ceremony in August.

Group 1 Widows - By The Numbers

Before Program - Avg. 2 livestock, \$10 mo. income
End Year 1 - Avg. of 6 livestock, \$60 mo. income
End of Year 2 - Avg. of 10 livestock, \$86 mo. income

Group 3 Widows Training

After attending several meetings, Group 3 women began breaking out of their shells, speaking up, laughing, and asking questions. Other women were slower to adapt to their new situation. Still shocked by the loss of their husbands, this hesitancy is understandable.

One of our instructors, Esther, began teaching these women about their rights as widows and what opportunities there are to receive government support. Our other instructors, WILK team members Cate, Nelson, and Larasha, taught business essentials, preparing them to start their new ventures with their upcoming grants.

Goats & Grants for Group 3 Widows

On September 7, the third group of women in HFW partook in their own Goats & Grants Ceremony in Amboseli. Dressed in blue shukas, these widows received their own goats and grants.



Tayiana, a Group 3 widow, being handed goats from her brother-in-law, a gov't chief whose mother was a widow.

The goats will provide long-term assets, producing even more goats in the future. The grants are seed money for their small businesses, which the ladies have already begun. We are so proud to see them grow!



WILK-TEC's Kim Teoli gifting a grant.



From left to right: HFW Officer Cate, Koyiaso, Mwatuni, & Joyce.



YOU can bring
HOPE & TRANSFORMATION
to Kenyans in Need with a Year-End Gift!

6 WAYS TO GIVE

- 1 Send us a check in the blue envelope
- 2 Donate online at waterislifekenya.org
- 3 Become a monthly donor (set up online)
- 4 Ask your employer about corporate matching
- 5 Contribute via your retirement plan or assets
- 6 Leave WILK as a beneficiary in your will



DONATE 

Every donation will support our ever-evolving work to bring clean water, income, and hope to our Maasai friends in southern Kenya.



Water is Life Kenya Helping Kenyans Bloom
Through Love & Water

Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.
EIN: 26-3185829

Shop Beaded Handicrafts at Etsy, Deerfield Wines, & DMNS

Our Beaded Handicrafts help Kenyan artisans make a living wage. This program supports 100 women artisans with money to pay for school fees and other household expenses.

You can now shop for select items, like holiday ornaments, on our **Etsy shop**! If you're in Delaware, you can also visit our WILK office or stop by Deerfield Fine Wines in the Shoppes at Louviers or the Delaware Museum of Nature & Science (DMNS) on Kennett Pike. Visit waterislifekenya.org/events to learn where we'll be next. Every purchase supports Kenyan women!

shop.waterislifekenya.org



Etsy

You can now shop a selection of our Kenyan Beaded Handicrafts directly on Etsy!



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waterislifekenya.org

Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Partnership Announcement: St. Philip's Lutheran Church Donating \$90k for a well in Inkisanjani

Last November, Joyce Tannian gave a presentation at St. Philip's Lutheran Church. During the talk, she discussed the importance of water in semiarid Kenya and shared how WILK water systems are \$80-\$100k.

The St. Philip's community did some reflecting. Then, in February, they contacted us to learn more about supporting a water project. Incredibly, **they decided to donate an entire borehole** by raising money as a feature of their annual appeal. Within a few months the project was fully funded. We're amazed by the dedication of the St. Philip's congregation, and we're so proud to work together with them on this water project.

This borehole will be at **St. Luke's Inkisanjani Secondary School**. It will also serve the adjacent Primary School and its neighbors. In July, we met with community leaders to assess Inkisanjani's water situation, and in August we performed a hydrogeological survey. The next step will be for their new Self-Help group to file for authorization to drill.

In September, Joyce updated the church at a Lunch & Learn presentation. WILK is also helping St. Philip's Outreach Committee plan a trip to Inkisanjani, as well as foster the connection between this Kenyan community and their church. We are so proud to be their partners!



Community meeting in Inkisanjani.



Joyce Presenting to our new partners, St. Philip's Lutheran Church.



An Outreach Committee Meeting with Joyce in Kenya.