



Go Ladies!

WILK Program Manager and Co-Founder Joseph Larasha points proudly at the 1st Year LAB program Oloirien Widows' Group crop farming project. The women invited WILK's Kenyan team, members from each of the other current 11 WILK LAB groups, community members, and leaders to their "Launching Party." Their goal was to impress everyone and then get them to contribute to their next project, a **gas station!** The ladies are on the move and throwing down the challenge to the others!

Transforming over 60,000 lives every day

WATER IS LIFE KENYA

Staying CONNECTED

SUMMER 2021

Letter from the Director

This year we launched a new theme: **Helping Kenyans bloom through love and water.** At the core of all we do together, dear partners, pulled from deep within our hearts, is wanting the best for the people we are working with. And isn't that what love is? Wanting good for another?

WILK's work with communities starts with water. We help people have the basic substance of life because without water nothing else can move forward. Next, we build on people's ability to manage their water resource through knowledge and skills learned in our Water Management Committee trainings. Some of you have heard us talk about the "cow bank." A livestock herd is a Maasai family's bank account. To keep the water flowing they need money or cows in their "cow bank" to pay for the gas that pumps the clean water. Without it the water stops flowing and women are back to walking hours for dirty water. Thus, we help them improve their income, which comes largely from livestock, with our Livestock as a Business Program.

It's also important to emphasize that the Maasai's livestock-keeping way of life works in tandem with conserving wildlife. Maasai don't hunt wildlife for food. Therefore wildlife can flourish. This allows many of us to fulfill our dream of one day going on safari to see elephants and other treasures of the African animal world. So, empowering smart livestock keeping is good for all of us: humans, livestock and wildlife!

WITH LOVE, we give, teach, preserve and invest in a better world.
TOGETHER, we are helping Kenyans bloom through love and water.

*THANK YOU,
Joyce Tannian*



Olmapinu Women and Children rejoice at the burst of bountiful water from their new borehole.

Olmapinu is completed!



Building a protective house for the diesel generator.

Another major water project is completed! Now people and livestock of Olmapinu have abundant, clean water. Where once there was day to day struggle, constant worrying for moms and dads and long treks across the border to Tanzanian water points where they were unwelcome, now there is hope and relief! Yes, with prayer, hard work and generosity from the family of WILK donors, things are better!

The original plan was to do a solar powered borehole, following the great success of the Namelok borehole last year. But Olmapinu has astute leaders who, after weighing the pros and cons of different systems, opted for the diesel powered generator. They explained “we realized that the

solar panels could easily be stolen since we live near a road with many illegal cross border (Kenya – TZ) activities.” In addition, since a generator requires fuel, borehole members would very easily understand paying water tariffs to buy diesel. In contrast, water pumped using solar energy is viewed as being “free water from God,” and therefore they shouldn’t pay tariffs. The reasoning made sense, so WILK agreed to install the diesel generator in a protective house.

To ensure sustainability of the project, WILK always requires community buy-in. This time their share was to construct livestock troughs. They paid for two, one for cattle and one for sheep and goats. The community collected their money promptly and the construction was completed in conjunction with WILK’s construction work. We anticipate strong management of the new borehole and expect the Olmapinu Water Management Committee to be a good example to other committees in the future!



Storage containers are elevated to discourage elephants from knocking them over to access the water.



Women and children now line up at their new borehole to get clean water. Improved health, more energy, and free time are just a few of the immediate changes they are experiencing.

LAB Graduation of two Women’s Groups: Oloirien and Singo

This year 2 women’s groups will be graduating from our Livestock as a Business (LAB) program. They have completed 4 years of training, received 4 revolving Livestock Loans, created and implemented action plans and impressed us and themselves with their accomplishments! Just as you might expect differences in the arc of development from 2 students completing high school, the rate of development of these two groups was different.

Upon comparison of the 2 groups, Oloirien Women started strong, with quick uptake of the training which led to profitable cow fattening and ambitious savings goals. They are finishing even stronger, with successful diversification into tomato farming and a recent purchase of 10 acres of land! Singo Women’s Group, however, took time to gain momentum. After the first two years we wondered if they were “getting it.” But now, Singo is advancing strongly. They conserved pasture, sold grass to their neighbors, planted and harvested beans and re-invested the money in a better breed of cows.



Graduating Group Singo Women with their group cows. In this, their 4th year, they bought their best cattle so far!

The strong progress, although at different rates, shows the importance of our 4-year investment in the Livestock as a Business groups. By staying close to the groups, encouraging, training and correcting them along the way, they have grown in confidence and skills. They have impressed their own husbands and neighbors at their ability to save money, manage livestock and become successful businesswomen, proudly contributing to a better standard of living for themselves and their families.

YOU FLASHED IT UP!!!

“Driving Change in Kenya” Flash Campaign update

We are so grateful and amazed at the generosity and love shown to us throughout the matching gift campaign, “Driving Change in Kenya”! Thanks to you, we raised the funds needed to replace our aging (17 years-old with 167,000 miles) Toyota Prado with a new, to us, 2014 Land Cruiser with only 24,000 miles.



WILK's new (to us) 2014 Land Cruiser.

Hope for Widows Pilot — What's on the horizon

You can expect to hear more about our pilot program called “Hope for Widows,” which will be part of our Livestock as a Business Program. I have been asking myself “are we reaching the most vulnerable, needy folks through our LAB program”? One group that is being left out are widows. We learned that widows are often marginalized in the Maasai community. Wives and children belong to the husband's family. All property, including land and livestock, is owned by the husband. When wives lose their husbands, they lose their status and property, while strict cultural norms prohibit re-marriage.



Widows rejoice that they now have their own land. WILK's next steps are to help these women with economic opportunity.

Additionally, a major change in the land use law in Kenya is causing widespread sub-division of historic communal land ranches for the Maasai tribe. For families or widows to claim their allocated land parcels, members are required to pay a fee for land surveying costs and paperwork. This fee has proved too much for many widows. Through a generous and caring donor, WILK was able to pay the fees for 40 widows and their families to secure their rightful land asset. Finally, a glimmer of hope. But true transformation and economic empowerment will happen when they are able to build up family livestock assets through our LAB program. Visit waterislifekeny.com/hope-for-widows-program to learn more.

Ilumpwa Group - Grass Management Missionaries!

Second year LAB group, Ilumpwa Livestock Keepers, have become missionaries of grass management in their home, Eselengei. With their neighbors, they established dry season and rainy season grazing areas to protect this valuable resource. Visible results include ample pasture and cattle in better condition. All are reaping the rewards: Group members personally, Ilumpwa as a group, since their livestock sold for a high profit, and the community at large. What does that mean for the livestock business on which they all depend? It means more and healthier animals since 1) bulls are eager to mate, 2) cows give birth more frequently (each year instead of every other year) and 3) more calves are surviving. LAB training empowers people to have higher incomes and a better life.



LAB trainings have inspired these members to think outside the box to benefit themselves and their community.

Newark, DE Girl Scout Troop #15 raises \$1,832 for clean water!

For their culminating project as Brownies, Girl Scout Troop #15 organized a Triathlon to raise funds for WILK. They decided to walk, ride and swim 4 miles total in honor of the women in Kenya who walk an average of 4 miles per day to get clean water for their families.

Troop Leader Karyn Lang explained that the eight 7-9 year olds in her troop finished up their year with a water unit, where they learned about the challenges of accessing clean water in the “WOW - Wonders of Water - It's Your Planet - LOVE It!” journey. It called on the girls to use their leadership skills and values to protect the waters of (Cont. next page)



Donation Corner

Please consider making a generous tax-deductible donation to **Water is Life Kenya** today. With your help WILK has made significant progress in our work to transform the lives of the Maasai people of Southern Kenya. Your support is vitally important to help us continue this life-changing work we are doing. Thank you!

Please DONATE

5 ways to donate today

Check

Checks made out to:
Water is Life Kenya

Online

waterislifekeny.com

Text—to—Give

(302)449-7349

Stocks

Contact us for steps
(302)894-7335

Make WILK a beneficiary of your will.

(Cont. from p.3 — Girl Scout article) Planet Earth. Since Karyn and her husband, Jeff, are Water is Life Kenya donors, they saw a great opportunity to connect their girls with a local organization working on precisely these issues. Moved by what they read on the Water is Life Kenya website about the challenges women and girls face, the girls were compelled to make a difference.

WILK Founder, Joyce Tannian and US Director, Colleen Leithren, were special guests at the closing ceremony for the Triathlon where the girls and their supportive, generous families presented their donations. The girls asked Joyce what kind of challenges people face with accessing water, why it is so hard to have something we all are used to getting so easily, and how will their donations help solve the problem. Joyce explained that digging deep wells to reach sufficient water supply is too expensive for many communities. The money they raised will be used to drill a well in a place called Irkasua, located in the highlands of Mt. Kilimanjaro, where women still walk 8 miles per day to get water for their families.



Brownie Troop 15, troop leaders Karyn Lang and Becky Galante and WILK leaders Joyce and Colleen, as girls prepare for swimming part of the triathlon.



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You can make a difference.

Become a sustaining donor today!

We want to give a big shout out to our monthly donors. Over the past year, their generous giving totals over \$6,300. That provides ½ the cost of drilling for a new borehole. We invite you to join this team of donors by becoming a sustaining donor. It has a two-fold benefit: a revenue stream we can count on and lower fundraising costs. A Sustaining Donor makes automatic monthly donations through our website using a credit card. You choose the amount you want to give each month. You can increase, decrease, or stop your gift at any time. Visit our website, waterislifekenyana.com, click on Donate to follow the steps. It's simple and fast.



Introducing: the Backsack

Beaded Handicrafts

Kenyan fabrics, called kitenge, are vibrant, colorful and often limited in production. Artisans design the fabric, but as soon as the fabric enters the market, customers are already demanding new designs, causing the market to abound with fresh patterns! So we decided to have our Kenya seamstress combine the uniqueness of these wonderful fabrics with the amazing wildlife in our region into a new product that is sure to please everyone. A gifted young Maasai artist designed the wildlife patches for the bags. Our new drawstring backpacks, called backsacks, arrived in the US this spring. We still have some in stock so visit our website www.waterislifebeads.com or [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) to order yours today!

