

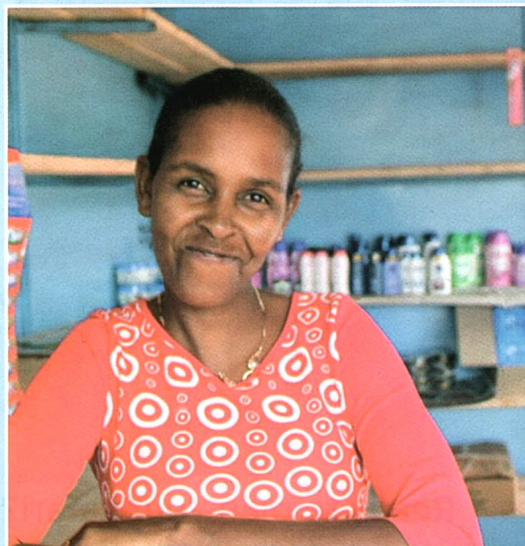
Fueling the Future *through water in Samburu*

By Linda Hooper

When it's in abundance, we give little thought to water, to those who struggle to get water every day, they know first-hand that WATER IS LIFE! In a growing number of countries, wars are already being fought over this precious commodity. Water is also the starting point for The Samburu Project, an organization working to bring clean, potable water – to a beautiful but parched part of Kenya.

Samburu is a stunning region, known for the Samburu Special Five (Reticulated Giraffe, Somali Ostrich, Grevy's Zebra, Garanok and the Oryx) who call the Samburu National Reserve their home. It is also home to the beautifully-adorned Samburu people who dot the landscape in their red beads and flowing shukahs. The Samburu are a pastoralist tribe, living according to tribal traditions and as such are being greatly impacted by drought and climate change. Enter The Samburu Project.

The Samburu Project provides access to clean water in an effort to impact health, education, women's empowerment and general well-being. Because of clean water, waterborne disease has been nearly eradicated in the communities served by TSP, girls are going to school in record numbers, small businesses are blossoming, and communities are growing food. Air Kenya is proud to be a sponsor of their work that is fueling the future of the Samburu people one drop at a time.



Jacinta Lekolii proudly displays her shop.

Eliminating a long walk for water gives women the gift of time. Time for income generation, self-investment, family care and ultimately a sustainable path out of poverty. With time, Samburu women in TSP well communities now have created brick-making businesses, starting beading collaboratives and turned a first time agricultural initiative into highly successful shops. In all, this has resulted in an increased recognition of Samburu women's skills and knowledge outside the scope of their traditional roles.



PHOTO:MAMEN SAURA

Lentanai Preschool

In Samburu, it is common for girls to not attend school as they are expected to join their mothers in the quest for water. With access to clean water nearby, the time spent fetching water is drastically reduced from six hours to thirty minutes. As a result, the number of girls attending primary school in TSP well communities has doubled!

Clean water means clean hands, clean dishes, and clean clothes. With clean water health centers grow, knowledge is spread, and rampant water-borne diseases like diarrhea and cholera are eliminated. Hygiene and Sanitation education is mandatory for TSP well communities. County health officers educate the community on the definition of good sanitation and hygiene, causes of water contamination, health problems caused by dirty water, instruction on hand-washing, water treatment of water in the household and much more.

With clean water, agricultural initiatives for this once, strictly pastoralist community are now possible for the first time. Food security is a reality during the dry season and food diversity is growing with the cultivation of kale, corn, beans, tomatoes and more. From door-step gardens to community kiosks, sustainable change because of water is eminent.



Mama Eric Lenguya attending her sack garden

For more information, visit: www.thesamburuproject.org

AirKenya is a proud sponsor of The Samburu Project