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## Water for Life Foundation

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 2011 the charity Water for Life Foundation was established by the founders Marco G. Walser and Dr. med. Tatjana Walser, with Dr. iur. Bernhard Madörin as chairman and Abdullah Demir as member of the Board. The initial aid projects have got underway, in the spirit of the foundation's goal of «helping people help themselves».

After successfully realizing the water cistern project in Pedra Branca/Brazil and participating in the renovation of the drinking water and sewage infrastructure of the Albert Schweizer Hospital in Lambaréné/Gabon, another water project has just reached fruition!

### **Water for Makaani**

The society «Friends of Makaani» has been founded with the aim to both spiritually and financially support the initiatives by the people of Makaani (Eastern Kenya) to overcome poverty in their village. The most pressing task was reliably supplying the village with clean drinking water. Water for Life financially supported the society to have a public water supply installed.

With the help of «Friends of Makaani», Water for Life, together with two other organizations, the village of Makaani has established its water supply in the form of a «Water Kiosk» in the centre of the village. By means of an electric pump (the village has its own power grid!), water is pumped up around 600 feet from the borehole to a cistern with a capacity of 10'000 liters. Afterwards, thanks to the gradient, the water is directed to the nearby «Water Kiosk» where it is then sold to the people of the village.

Previously, no charity had ever shown an interest in the village of Makaani. Therefore, the expectations in the surprise visitors from Switzerland were quite high. However, in a country where, for decades, politicians have shamelessly enriched themselves at the expense of others, and where policemen are only getting by through blackmail and bribery, obstacles are par for the course. A long hard road began, with many a sleepless night. Heavy rainfall, unexpectedly hard rocks, theft and increased demands by companies made work considerably more difficult than envisaged. Working through behaviour that originally grated on nerves, and building the necessary mutual trust only came about after many meeting and talks.



On 21 May 2014 the project was finally handed over to the people. To start with, water of excellent drinking quality was distributed for free! Since then a 20-litre canister of water costs 5 Kenyan Shillings (around CHF 0.05). Owners of private wells in the nearby area are known to charge the same price for contaminated water!

### **The Next Steps?**

Currently a reliable worker, who had contributed during the whole construction period, is responsible for the smooth running of the project. Towards the end of

2014, the pump supplier will check the installation. He is also in charge of the annual check of the pipes and the pump. Maintenance work should be minimal. Monthly reporting will be supervised by the «Friends of Makaani» representative, Ms Maya Käser, whose next visit to Makaani is planned for January 2015.

### **Pleasant side-effect**

The water project has kick-started a sense of community in Makaani, probably because the people started speaking to each other more. Never before had it been possible to form groups with a common goal. Now two «self-help groups» have been formed, and they have been registered – a requirement to be able to apply for a small loan from the government. The two groups have each opened a bank account and have saved a small amount of money which is now at their disposal. Altogether 60 people are involved, all with the same goal - to improve their economic situation.

Further information and pictures are available on the website [www.waterforlife.ch](http://www.waterforlife.ch).

Kind regards

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