



24 March 2023

Statement in response to the UN 2023 Water Conference:

As a stakeholder working exclusively and closely with the indigenous, nomadic tribes in the Samburu region of Kenya, The Samburu Project urges the international community to utilize the collective resources of small, locally based NGOs who are operating on the ground daily to provide universal water, hygiene, and sanitation for all.

While individually small, NGOs, like The Samburu Project, possess an untapped potential that, if harnessed properly, could collectively accelerate the Water Action Agenda and ensure the successful attainment of its goals by 2030. It is small, locally based NGOs who are on the front lines of today's water crisis. They are the ones providing access to water where it does not exist. They are the ones teaching about sanitation and hygiene and improving health outcomes in the process. And they are the ones who are liberating woman and girls from the daily burden of searching for water—freeing them to start small business, such as gardening and brick-making, that are only possible with water availability.

Despite meeting the water crisis head on and working face-to-face with those suffering its effects, small, locally based NGOs are largely overlooked by major private and public sector donors. But the front lines cannot be ignored. We are in need of supplies to facilitate our work. We are in need of staff to provide assistance, instruction, and empathy to those suffering from the ramifications of climate change, lack of access to clean water, and proper sanitation and hygiene. Proper and timely investment in small, locally based NGOs is therefore imperative. With a pulse to the ground, they know best how to employ the financial and other resources committed by various stakeholders during the UN 2023 Water Conference.

Any successful collaborative, international effort to address the water crisis therefore must look first and foremost to small, locally based NGOs. For almost two decades, The Samburu Project has answered the call when given the funds and other resources to do so. To date, it has drilled 145 water wells, providing more than 100,000 Samburu people with this life saving resource. We have built on the foundation of clean water by facilitating additional programs for our partner communities that focus on improving general health, expanding educational opportunities, empowering women, and encouraging economic growth.



Many of these interventions were discussed in various sessions of the Water Conference. It was affirming to hear that the international community is focused on what small, locally based NGOs, like The Samburu Project, are already doing on the front lines—namely working to alleviate the effects of the impact of water on women and girls; the importance of menstrual health, gender equity, and education for girls; and working with youth and indigenous populations.

The Samburu Project was proud and honored to have been a specially accredited NGO at the UN 2023 Water Conference and stands ready to fulfill its commitments to the Water Action Agenda. Over the next five years, The Samburu Project will implement 60 new water projects, delivering clean water to an additional 60,000 people by 2028. Furthermore, by 2033, The Samburu Project is committed to bringing water to every Samburu person, permanently eradicating the "walks for water" currently burdening women and children every day in this beautiful, arid region. It urges, however, the private and public sector across the globe to give it, and other similar NGOs, the financial and other resources to do even more.

Respectfully,

Linda Hooper

Executive Director