



**M.E.A.K - Report for Fondation Eagle:
Interim report 2023 – January to June 2023
Project: MEAK / Milgis Wildlife-friendly wells project, Milgis
Conservancy, Samburu County, Kenya**

Donor:

Fondation Eagle, Switzerland

Donor's reference:

FF 06661

Charity:

Medical & Educational Aid to
Kenya (UK), together with the
Milgis Trust
(Kenya)

Date of acceptance:

December 13th 2022

Date donation received:

December 21st 2022

Amount of Donation:

A one-off grant of \$10,705

Duration of project:

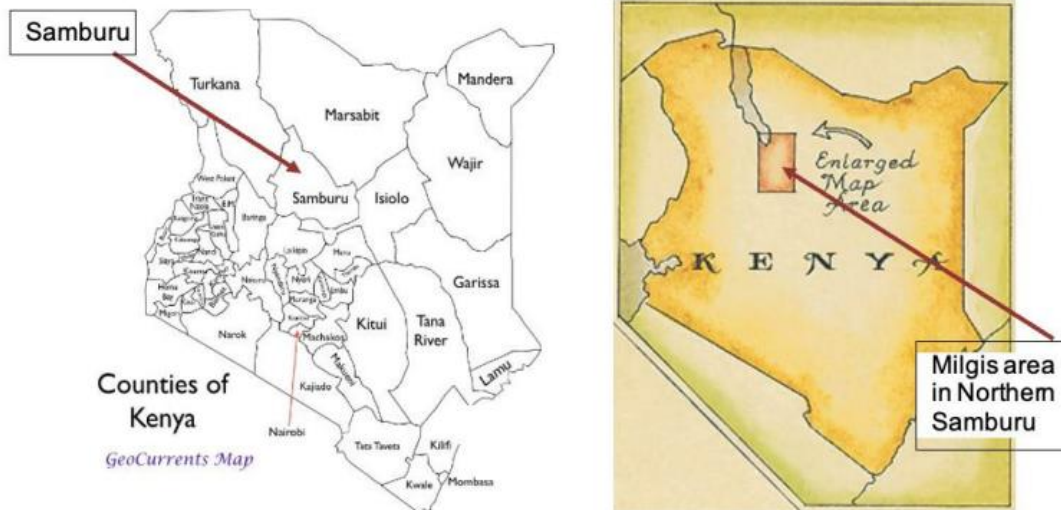
It is estimated that the grant will fund the operation & maintenance of the water projects for a one-year period, but if maintenance costs are low, then the funding will be carried forward to 2024.



Our monitoring team inspecting a well on the Milgis lugga

Estimated number of beneficiaries:

This funding is being used to create 32 separate wildlife-friendly wells to prevent wildlife, particularly elephants, from destroying and contaminating drinking water wells for communities in the Milgis Ecosystem. This is a 6000km² area within the northern rangelands of the Matthews & Ndotto mountains – within Samburu county but also extending into Marsabit County.

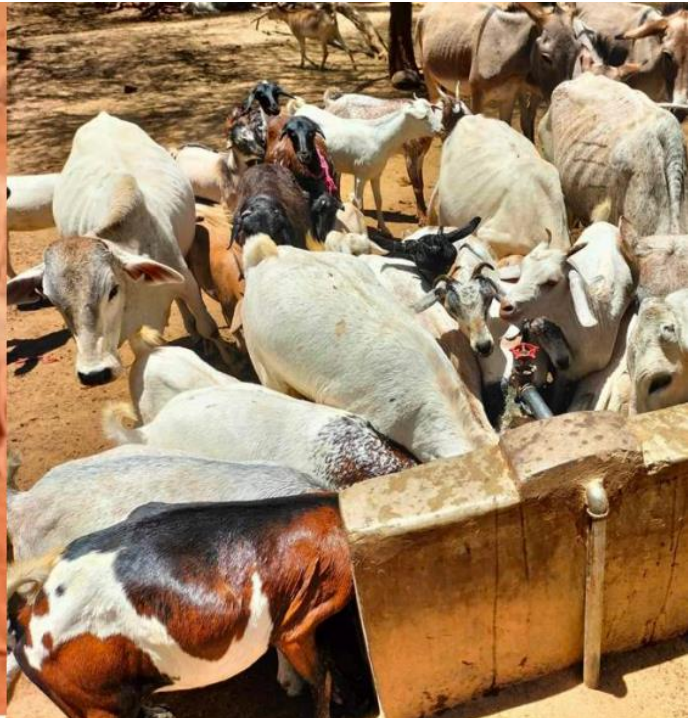


Report from the Milgis Trust – Project summary & overview:

Water has been the biggest issue in northern Kenya during the recent drought that spanned more than three years in some places. Of course, not everybody is fortunate enough to benefit from a water project. And most water projects could not cope with the sheer pressure from livestock and people. In these areas people are forced to dig wells in the dry sand rivers. Of course, the wildlife must drink too! Sadly, wildlife is usually unable to get water from the boreholes because there is simply too much traffic and no water left by the time darkness falls.

The result is very thirsty wildlife! These animals, particularly elephants are forced to try and drink from the wells that have been hand-dug by people in the sand rivers. Mostly, they cannot reach the water, and often fall inside the wells – sometimes drowning or dying from exhaustion. Shallow wells are safer; however, they end up becoming contaminated or destroyed from wallowing wildlife.

It is a very common issue across the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, yet very few people are doing anything about it. Therefore, we are extremely pleased that you have decided to support this cause – both for the benefit of people and that of wildlife!



The community digging a deep well



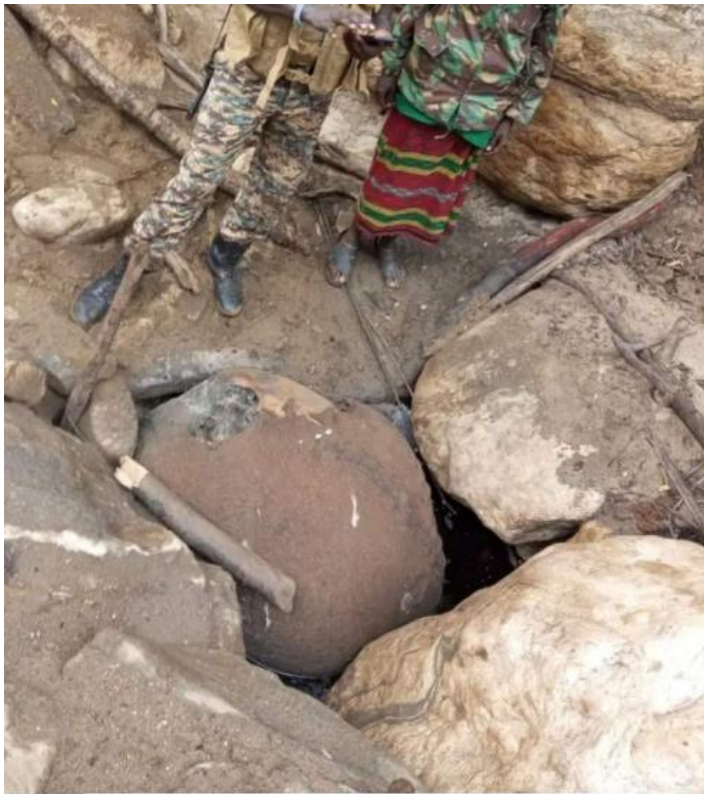
A shallow well that has been used by wildlife – making the water unfit for human consumption



Ele's making a mud bath at a water point that the community also use



A risky way to have to get water everyday



An unfortunate elephant that fell into a well head first

As you can see above, it is extremely difficult for elephants to drink from wells that don't have ramps dug into them. Even full-grown adults must go down onto their knees and stretch for the water. The younger ones cannot get any water at all. Many young elephants died of thirst during the recent drought.

Inevitably, there will be elephants that reach too far and end up falling into the wells. This is a slow and horrible ordeal that usually ends up in death. The well is destroyed and the community are forced to go and dig another well. In some places there are no other viable well sites so the only water source is destroyed and people must move their homesteads.

These past six months our teams have worked tirelessly to ensure that all of the ele-friendly wells are maintained on a daily basis. On average, there have been 32 wells at any one given time. The locations of these do change occasionally depending on rainfall and elephant movements. (see map on page 7)

It has been incredibly successful! Communities are now able to keep their own wells undisturbed and clean. There have not been any elephants falling into wells. There has been a lot less human wildlife conflict. Even better, the elephants have not been damaging the water projects as much as they would before. SO overall we feel that the impact has been very significant and look forward to keeping this standard of service provision for the remainder of the year.



Tracks from an elephant that drank during the night

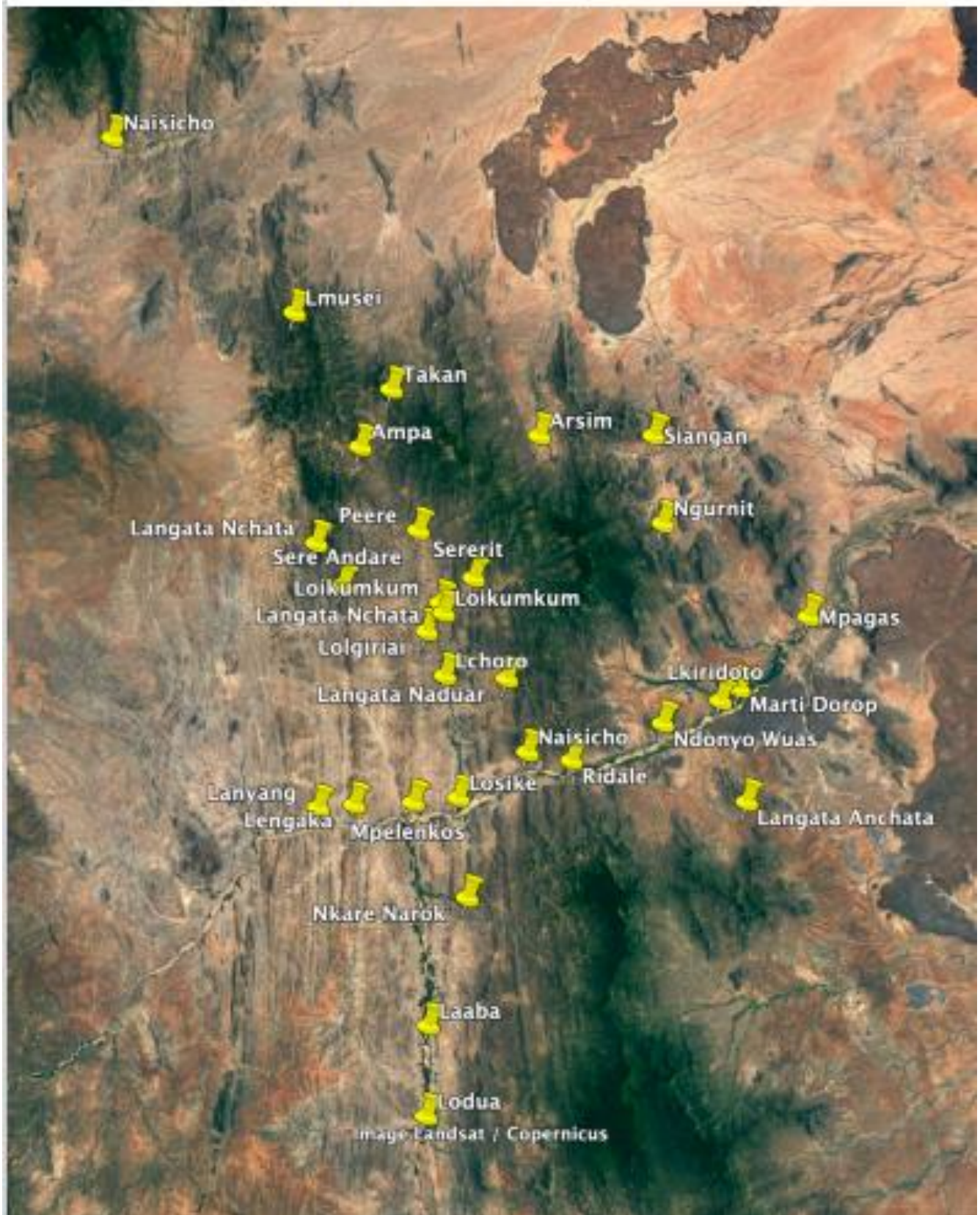


A family of elephants using one of our ele-friendly wells at night. Note that even the tiny little baby in the centre is able to safely access the water.



A very large ramp that is maintained daily into the well at Peere. (see map)

Map of locations that we are maintaining wells



Challenges in implementing & maintaining the wildlife-friendly wells:

Drought has increased the competition for water and can create conflict between animals and humans at wells and water projects. Animals will often destroy parts of water projects in their attempts to get water to drink, which is costly in terms of water lost and repairs.

In areas where there are hand dug wells (the water projects, unfortunately are not able to help the entire population of the Milgis ecosystem) it is extremely difficult for elephants to drink from these steep wells that do not have ramps dug into them. Even full-grown adults must go down onto their knees and stretch for the water. The younger ones cannot get any water at all. Many young elephants died of thirst during the recent drought. Inevitably, there will be elephants that reach too far and end up falling into the wells. This is a slow and horrible ordeal that usually ends up in death. The well is destroyed and the community are forced to go and dig another well. In some places there are no other viable well sites so the only water source is destroyed and people must move their homesteads.

The shallow wells being created are much safer for animals (see below) but they are at risk from being contaminated or destroyed by wallowing wildlife.

Impact of the wildlife friendly wells:

The shallow wells are much safer for animals, in particular elephants.

The challenges described above with wells used by wildlife are common issue across the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, yet very few people are doing anything about it. Therefore, we are extremely pleased that you have decided to support this cause – both for the benefit of people and the wildlife.

This well project has been incredibly successful! Communities are now able to keep their own wells undisturbed and clean. There have not been any elephants falling into wells. There has been a lot less human-wildlife conflict. Even better, the elephants have not been damaging the water projects as much as they would before.

Overall, the impact has been very significant and we look forward to keeping this standard of service provision for the remainder of the year.

