

KALIMBENE WATER PROJECT # KMK0816
COMPLETION REPORT WITH PHOTOS
Kangeta, Meru County, Kenya, Africa

Quote from Sister Jane: “The prayer of the people has been answered.”

Background History of Chalice’s Kangeta sub-site

Chalice’s Kangeta sub-site is located in Meru County (Igembe-central Kangeta ward). It is a densely populated community which lies in the lee-ward side of the Nyambene forest. Its terrains consist of around 25 square kilometres of semi-arid hills and valleys. Water is a scarce commodity as rainfall is minimal. The connections from underground water sources are only found in major centres. The women (often grandmothers) and children who are pulled from school are required to carry heavy water containers on their heads while others who are fortunate enough to own a donkey or mule are able to transport a few containers at a time. During the rainy season they depend on roof catchment systems. For those who were unable to make the journey they had to purchase water from local vendors when the financial means is available or endure the hardship of going without.

Chalice’s Kangeta sub-site was established in 2007 under the leadership of our Meru Sponsor site which has been established since 1999. The sub-site began with 65 children and currently supports 500 Chalice sponsored children. In addition to receiving financial support through Chalice’s child sponsorship program the Kangeta sub-site receives support from the “Chalice Children” Nutrition programme, Christmas Gift Catalogue and Chalice’s eRoots agricultural program. The guardians of sponsored children who in many cases consist of an elderly grandparent or grandparents have established 19 family circle groups which also have incorporated a small group savings and budgeting component.

Project objectives

The main goal of the project was to bring a safe clean source of water closer to those who were required to walk long distances every day to obtain it from the county Kalimbene borehole.

The project commenced in April 2017 after several meetings with the local communities to plan and organise the roles and responsibilities of all the parties involved. The community members identified their roles during and after the project completion to facilitate ownership, continuity and sustainability of the project.

Some of the roles included digging of trenches for the two water pipe lines, securing land for the two water tanks, putting in place water management committees which consisted of five members for each line and signing legal agreements as a reference for any future conflict. The community also put into place security measures and policies for water maintenance. The Chalice Kangeta sub-site has also committed to project follow up for at least the next three years with annual reports. The project members worked very hard to achieve their objectives as planned and everybody is very happy with the process and the successful completion of the project.

One distribution storage tank has been established at Mangoja, 4 Kilometres from Kalimbene with the second storage tank at Eastleigh located 4.8 kilometres from Kalimbene.

As quoted by Sister Jane: “A clean local source of water has many benefits. In addition to improving the quality and quantity of the crops grown in small kitchen gardens, school and community gardens, livestock keeping can be expanded with more modern farming technologies giving us an increase in food security. Children can remain in school and there is clean water for drinking, cooking, bathing and other household activities which improves health and prevents new cases of communicable diseases. “The prayer of the people has been answered.””

Recently, the community members of Mangoja and Eastleigh gathered at their respective water tanks for the official opening of the water points. The constructed tanks were decorated with ribbons as a sign of joy, hope and new life after receiving the awaited gift. The members’ chanted songs of joy and excitement, dancing and clamping hands. The joy in their faces was overwhelming.

“Water is the best gift we have ever had”, said one of the community members. No life without water and with water there is much hope of new life and developments to take place. We thank God, Chalice Canada, The Good Shepherd Sisters and all the people involved for this good work. There is a beginning and an end for everything. We have come from far, thank God we have reached our goal and we have water with us, what a joy.....

From another member, “I am very happy today, the distance to fetch water is shortened; we have been walking long distances the whole day looking for water and by the end of the day we grow weary because of hunger and tiredness; however today we can look forward and above all else we are grateful to God”.

All members of the community were very happy and appreciative, and they concluded that water is to bring peace, togetherness and development in the community for example planting trees in our neighbourhood.

Below: A water tank is being decorated for the official opening.



Below: Fr. Anthony, Sr. Jane and Rev. Ann at the ribbon cutting ceremony and blessing of the tank.



Below: The community celebrates. Chalice staff, project leaders and the parish priest of Kangeta parish cut the cake and share the joy with community members.



Below: "Thanks and Praise to everyone" that has played a part in giving the community the "gift of water".



Below: The community brakes into song and dance



Below: Donkeys also benefit with a shorter trip home from the water distribution points



The people of Kangeta, Thank You and acknowledge with gratitude deep from our hearts the generosity of everyone who has made this water possible, especially the Chalice donors for without their support this would not be a reality.

We look forward to working closely and effectively with you on other projects. May the Almighty God bless you abundantly. Sr. Jane