

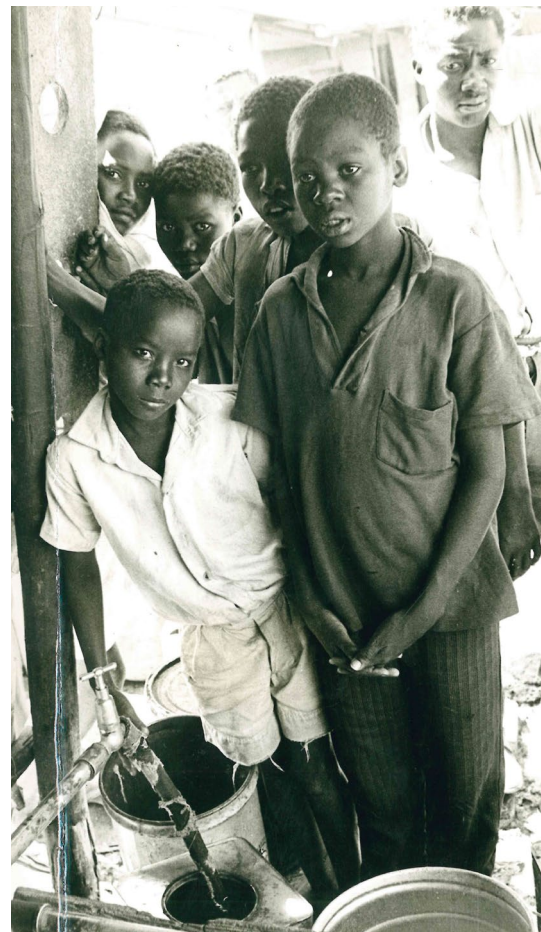
# MAJI NI UHAI MAJI NI HAKI

*EASTLANDS RESIDENTS DEMAND THEIR RIGHT TO WATER  
A PARTICIPATORY REPORT*

MATHARE SOCIAL JUSTICE CENTRE



**In Defense of Social Justice**  
[www.matharesocialjustice.org](http://www.matharesocialjustice.org)





*Dedicated to all Eastlands residents who have died of cholera, and all of the mothers and fathers who spent countless hours everyday trying to make sure their families have clean water at home.*

*No one should die from drinking a cup of water.*

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## Waterless Scars

Where is the water in Mathare? Where is the water in Kayole? Where is the water in Eastlands? If more than 70% of the population of Nairobi does not have access to clean, safe and adequate water, as provided for in Article 43 of the 2010 Constitution, what therefore is the point of the Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company (NCWSC)? Do they exist just to penalize what they call the “illegal” tapping of water? Why does the Ministry of Water and Sanitation even exist if it can’t fulfill its mandate “to ensure water resources availability and accessibility to all”? There are seven State Corporations focused on water, what is it that they actually do?

In our neighbourhoods in Mathare, Kayole, Dandora, Kariobangi, Kamukunji, Mukuru, Githurai, Ruai, Tena, Umoja and elsewhere, water provision costs more, is less safe, and is less consistent than in other richer parts of the city.

By being marked as “informal,” and intentionally maintained like this, our home areas, particularly those called “slums,” are largely neglected by the government through the denial of basic rights and infrastructure. Even though, for example, Mathare has been around for close to 100 years, there is still no sufficient piped water infrastructure, or adequate housing and sanitation provisions.

But our people have always fought this: in one instance in the early 1970s, some Mathare residents and their sympathetic MP collaborated to lay pipes in order to access the city’s water network. This was in the same decade that an average of 870 residents shared the same water tap and there were roughly 136 people to each latrine.<sup>1</sup> In spite of these collective efforts, the city declined to include Mathare in the water system. Mathare residents asked then: “Who, then, was responsible if they drank impure water?”<sup>2</sup> The government continues to evade responsibility.

Since early 2018, residents from a variety of neighbourhoods in Eastlands have been coming together in the Mathare Social Justice Centre (MSJC) space to think through how to demand water collectively for our communities. A cross-section of residents – fathers, students, mothers, carwash operators, small business owners and other local activists – from across the city came to collectively strategize towards the local provision of water, a human right and a basic need.

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1 Corburn, Jason, and Jack Makau. 2016. “Coproducing Slum Health in Nairobi, Kenya.” In *Slum Health: From the Cell to the Street*, edited by Jason Corburn and Lee Riley, 153–189. Berkeley: University of California Press.

2 Hake, Andrew. 1977. *African Metropolis: Nairobi’s Self-Help City*. New York: St. Martin’s Press.

We met in a space, the MSJC community office, where we have not seen any water from our tap in two years, and where our water supply continues to be dependant on water delivery that fluctuates in price and is not clean. In fact, it is highly contaminated as tests conducted by the Water Resources Authority would show.

Water access continues to be a daily struggle, and the meetings with residents from Kayole, Ruai, Mathare, Eastleigh, Umoja, and even Westlands, affirmed this. While 70% of Nairobi's population lives within informal settlements, only 20% of these residents have access to piped water, leaving them to rely on private suppliers, many of whom are involved in powerful water cartels.<sup>1</sup> Although various literature and even (insincere) governor declarations point towards upgrading policies and more consistent provision, for the most part these have been largely insufficient. What's more, during seasons of heavy rain the incidence of cholera increases significantly, and it appears to be, principally, children who suffer the most from this disease.

This report is a result of these meetings we have been having with community members, the majority of who came from Mathare and Kayole. It wants to show the impact the lack of water has in our communities, but also to say we are tired of this grave injustice and will continue to work to make sure we have water just like the people in Runda, Kileleshwa, Spring Valley, Muthaiga and State House. Water points are not enough; we demand piped network and adequate infrastructure.

We demand water relief, a fixing of the system and lasting justice.

How much longer must our fundamental rights be violated? Or are we to say that Article 43 of the Constitution is a joke? Our exclusion from basic service delivery, we know, is also connected to how our lives are taken for granted and not considered valuable.

Collectively we offer this participatory report not only to say ***maji ni uhai, maji ni haki***, ("water is life, water is a right"), but to demand that poor people have access to basic rights in Nairobi. Our children have been waiting for years for water. And we demand it, not for tomorrow, but for today.

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1 Gulyani, Sumila, Debabrata Talukdar, and R. Mukami Kariuki. 2005. "Universal (non) service? Water markets, household demand and the poor in urban Kenya." *Urban Studies* 42, no. 8: 1247-1274.





*Young people in Mathare queuing for water in the 1970s*

# **Constitution of Kenya**

## *Article 43*

*43. (1) Every person has the right -*

- (a) to the highest attainable standard of health, which includes the right to health care services, including reproductive health care;*
- (b) to accessible and adequate housing, and to reasonable standards of sanitation;*
- (c) to be free from hunger, and to have adequate food of acceptable quality;*
- (d) to clean and safe water in adequate quantities;***
- (e) to social security; and*
- (f) to education.*

*(2) A person shall not be denied emergency medical treatment.*

*(3) The State shall provide appropriate social security to persons who are unable to support themselves and their dependants.*

## ***What is the Situation? (From March 22 2018 Community Dialogue in Mathare on World Water Day)***

### ***Water is Expensive and Difficult to Access***

- We have no access to piped water
- It is expensive to buy because of cartels. In a week people can even pay 900 shillings if they have kids, when they do not even have 200 shillings extra for water
- People are prevented from using pumps to access water—people are not being allowed to use water pumps even when the pressure is low; there is barely any pressure when the water comes
- The meters are expensive and also do not work: water has become a commodity
- Rain floods the river and then this water floods houses bringing water diseases and even carrying houses away
- Even when it rains, the water is not harvested
- Automated water ATMs are not working
- Poor piping, lots of garbage and therefore contamination
- It is hard for people with disabilities to get water
- The last time MSJC had water in the tap was November 2016

### ***Lack of Reliable Water Leads to Poverty and Illness***

- Life is expensive for us because of buying water
- Cholera, malaria and bilharzia are common because of unclean water
- We find that life is expensive because of needing medical treatment all of the time because of diseases from water
- The time it takes to get water is too long, it impacts our lives a lot and you can even be late for work because you were fetching water for your family
- Lack of confidence in yourself if you have not washed and feel dirty; stigmatization by people if you are dirty
- It brings ethnic conflict because, for example, in August 2017 there was no water in Mathare except in the 4A and 4B area, and then people had to go and buy 20 litres for 50 shillings and even 100 shillings across the river—this caused conflict
- There is no medicine in the cheap hospitals that people can access like Shining Hope for Communities (SHOFCO), and when you go and buy medicine elsewhere, because of being infected by dirty water, it is expensive



### **Questions**

- Why did Governor Sonko only bring water during his election campaign?
- How can the government borrow money for a train but cannot provide water for citizens?

**WATER IS A RIGHT! MAJI NI UHAI NA MAJI NI HAKI!**



*Children fetching water in Mathare*

## Personal Stories

The majority of the people in Mathare access water through illegal communal pipes or through purchasing it from vendors and kiosks. Access to water in Mathare has become a thriving informal business with minimal or no rules governing the pricing of water. The result has been that people living in informal settlements end up paying up to 10 times more for water than those in formal settlements. Furthermore, “illegal” taps and broken water pipes are not even an absolute assurance of water access as they constantly experience water shortages. The average cost for water in Mathare is approximately 5 shillings for a 20 litre jerrycan. However, the price increases dramatically when there are water shortages, which occur approximately 3 times a week. Many people cannot meet the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees’ (UNHCR’s) recommendation of a minimum of 20 litres per person per day for drinking, cooking and washing.<sup>1</sup> Lack of access to water, therefore, causes many forms of insecurity as people’s health suffers, given that many only have access to 1 glass of water a day which is not only unclean, but also unreliable.

MSJC conducted a survey to discover people’s experiences with water in Mathare and discovered that out of those who answered our questionnaire, over 50% have suffered from a water illness. In a day a local clinic in Mathare sees 15 people affected by cholera, and around 200 who have been infected by typhoid. This is in stark contrast to the 13 people we spoke with from more prosperous neighbourhoods, none of whom have ever contracted any illness from drinking or using water. Community members also struggle with basic household activities such as cooking and cleaning. One mother told us that there have been many times when she has had to choose between doing dishes and washing her baby. Unfortunately, this is the reality that many people in Mathare have to grapple with every day. We share some of the stories residents tell about their struggle for water.

## **A Mathare Resident**

*"Growing up in Mathare I experienced a lot of problems accessing clean water and it's crazy how the situation has failed to improve over the time! Most homes do not have enough water for necessary household consumption. I have heard that the average person is supposed to drink eight glasses of water a day. However, according to my reality as a resident of Mathare, it is normal to have one glass a day, which ultimately reduces the average lifespan of many people around here. As a matter of fact, most members of my community grapple with the uncertainty of whether or not the water they consume is safe. It is now a matter of drinking just to quench thirst! Consequently, so many people end up suffering from water-borne diseases given the levels of contamination caused by sewage infested pipes. My heart breaks everytime I remember my late cousin who lost his life at the very young age of 18 due to cholera. This one day he kept complaining that he was not feeling so well, that he was vomiting and had diarrhoea, and then he died later that night upon arrival in the hospital. Initially, we had imagined the reason for his demise to be illicit liquor until the post-mortem found it to be cholera. This is the sad reality we have to live with over here. We therefore cannot help but feel absolutely neglected by the government; we barely even get information about public participation avenues. A lot has to be done and it has to be done with urgency. The community has to be allowed to participate in informing government projects so as to eradicate illegal connections and avail adequate and safe drinking water to the people."*

## Teacher from Mama Africa



*"I teach at Mama Africa Onlus, a primary school located in Mabatini ward. The school gets water from the church right next to it and pays a monthly fee to the city council of up to 1500 shillings. The school harvests water because of the high rates of shortages that are experienced in Mathare. The practice of harvesting water is extremely important because without water, our institution would not be able to run properly as we need it for daily needs such as cooking, washing and so forth. Cartels around here take advantage of this fact and charge 50 shillings per litre when we have no water. Our monthly bill does not depend on the water shortages. So even if we have had no water for the month and have had to buy it from cartels – we still have to pay! In fact, last October we had no water all month and still had to pay the usual monthly fee. Even though we have more water than many places in Mathare – we still need more. The water we have is not enough when you consider how many children we have in the school, as well as how many tasks require the use of water."*

## Water Transporter



*"One way I earn money is through transporting water to predominately businesses and occasionally individuals. I work with two other young men and at the end of the day we split the profits equally. We buy 20 litres of water at 5 shillings then sell it at 20 shillings to known community members, and 40 shillings to those who live outside the area. Our business thrives during water shortages, as it is during this period that businesses and individuals' regular access to water is being cut off, forcing them to find other means. As a precautionary measure, businesses order double the amount of water for their daily needs, approximately 160 litres. This is done out of the uncertainty of whether or not there will be access to water the following day. Our area of work is vast since our clientele is spread across Mathare 4A, Mabatini, and Kiamaike – our main water source being situated in Mlango Kubwa. Our biggest clients are located in Mabatini ward because there are only a few water points there and they are all run by water cartels that have inflated the prices exponentially. For example, during water shortages the Mabatini cartels charge approximately three times more than other places. I have been selling water for five years now and have not noticed a difference in the trend with water shortages, which shows how the situation has failed to improve. In order to avoid the high amount of shortages, people should be educated on how to preserve and harvest water, as there are still water shortages even during the rainy seasons."*



## A Mother



*"In order to secure our daily water needs our community has illegally tapped into the main pipe running through Mabatini ward, which we use for cooking, cleaning, washing, drinking and other necessary needs. The water is not the cleanest as the pipe runs through sewage – however, it is the only water we have access to. For these reasons, we as a community are trying to clean up the area so we have safer access to water. Surprisingly, no one in my family has ever gotten sick from drinking the water even though we do not treat it. I think this is because our bodies have grown accustomed to the type of water! We don't bother attempting to harvest rainwater because 'flying toilets' are very common in the area because of the lack of toilets. When there are water shortages we have to go all the way to Pangani to access water, which is not only extremely far but also expensive as it ends up being 100 shillings for only 20 litres of water. In order to make water more available the best thing we can do is store it, which is also dependent on how many jerrycans a household owns. Water shortages are extremely frequent and can last up to a month and longer. There have been many times that I have had to choose between washing my baby and cooking during these frequent periods of water shortages."*



## **A Vendor**



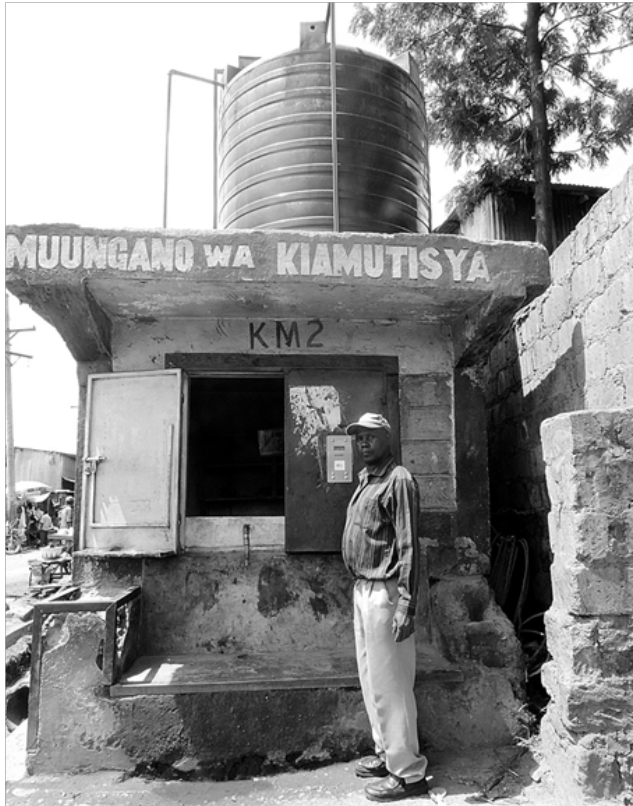
*"We have managed to pipe our water directly from the main one coming from Ndakaini. At least the water comes treated, making it safer to sell to people. Here, water shortages are incredibly frequent, with people going at least 3-4 days without water a week. On a normal day, when there are no shortages, I carry water for buyers in a fully packed handcart. I sell one 20 litrejerry can for 20 shillings for carriage services, but in case the buyer comes to the water point themselves they can buy it at 10 shillings for a jerry can. When there are shortages, however, the deal changes; I sell a 20 litrejerry can full of water at 40 shillings because most times I have to carry it for long distances. Sometimes I think that maybe if the government constructed a few more dams at these idle big pieces of land to harvest rainwater and also erect water treatment plants, then maybe we would battle this issue of shortages with much ease."*

## Young Man Who Fights Fires



*"Accessing water in Mabatini is a struggle because the water supply is constantly getting turned off. We have access to water approximately 3 times a week so in order to have an adequate supply we need to store it in jerrycans. The lack of water is very problematic when there are fires in the area. When the fire department is called upon they rarely ever come in time as they are located outside Mathare and accessing the area is difficult for their trucks given the layout of the area. For these reasons, it is primarily a community effort to put out fires. Members of the community use their own household water, which is put into basins, and then passed through a line-up of people to the front-liners putting out the fire. We also burst many pipes around the surrounding area and use this water – that is if there is water that day. If we run out of the harvested water and the piped water then we have the options of using sewage water or the Mathare river water. However, these options are not always available depending on the location of the fire, since sometimes it is too far from the river or the surrounding area may not have any accessible sewage water. If this is the case we are left with the tasks of demolishing houses that are next to the fire in order to stop it from spreading. After fires the water situation gets worse, as putting out the fires entails bursting lots of pipes in the area and using up stored household water."*

## Water Kiosk



*"I work at a water kiosk in MlangoKubwa, Mathare. The kiosk was set up by the Nairobi Water Company then allocated to our self-help group "Muungano wa Kiamutisia." Water is supplied to our kiosk by the water company in lorries, after which we store it in a tank. We then sell it cheaply to members of the community at 5 shillings for a 20 litre jerrycan. Therefore, water availability for us is completely dependent on the company's effectiveness in delivery. Most times delays on their end take us up to 2 weeks of no water. Proceeds from selling the water go into buying more and also supporting the group so that we maintain sustainability."*

## **Shofco Worker**

*"Shofco provides medical care for the community of Mathare. In a day we see around 15 people who have been affected by cholera, and around 200 who have been infected by typhoid. The reasons why so many people are being infected by water-borne diseases in Mathare is because they lack access to safe and clean water, and there are inadequate sanitation facilities. The price of water in Mathare has been inflated and is too expensive for the majority of the community members. As a result, many people have illegally tapped into the main water pipes that run through Mathare. These pipes pass through sewage and dirt increasing the possibility of water contamination, making the water risky to consume. The inadequate water infrastructure in Mathare has negative effects on the access to clean water, because many people are forced to use unsanitary means to dispose of their bodily fluids, as well as their garbage. Since accessing water is a struggle for community members, many of them do not consider how important it is to treat the water that they have acquired. Additionally, many of those who have been educated on the importance of clean water do not have the appropriate mechanisms to treat it. Because of this, the age group most impacted by water borne diseases are infants and children as their immune systems are weaker than adults. In order to realize the constitutional right of clean and safe water, development projects need to be implemented to ensure adequate facilities, as well, people should be educated on the importance of clean water."*

## Street Vendor



*"I sell bottled water in the streets and the busy roads of Nairobi. This is how I support my wife and kids. I sell water from a number of companies; Uhai, Alphat, Aquafrost, Aquachill and so forth. Since the companies are responsible for packaging and sealing, I get to deal with water entirely as a commodity to buy and sell at a profit. The current wholesale price is 25 shillings and 11 shillings for the big and small sizes respectively. I then sell the water at 50 shillings and 20 shillings. Usually, business is more lucrative when there is a traffic snarl-up or depending on the climate; sunny weather being a good sign but rain means foul luck for me."*



# The Water Crisis

**Eunice from Umoja**

*"Water comes twice a week Friday and Saturday. In our house jerry cans are very many."*

**Joyce from Njiru**

*"Water comes once that is on Tuesdays. Water is really scarce here."*

**Mary, owner of a dispensary in Matopeni, Kayole**

*"Running this dispensary is really expensive and tricky without running water. When I first came to Matopeni I bought borehole water at Boston borehole and drunk it without treating it first or boiling it properly. My family and I suffered from typhoid and I had to close my dispensary for a while to treat them."*

**Irene from Kayole**

*"House rent, water and you need to eat? No, all this is really weighing people down especially the low-income earners. You stay even for two weeks without water and the government expects you to survive without this basic need. We are paying taxes, are we lesser beings or what?"*





## Water vendor in Matopeni

*"This is the best business in Matopeni right now. You and your family will never go hungry."*

## Stephen from Umoja

*"There is no adequate supply of water. It makes rent expensive in the apartments where there are boreholes. People cannot clean clothes as often as they would like. If people are visiting you you have to keep filling the toilet tank. The cost of water is between 1800 – 2000 shillings a month – this is water coming from a borehole."*

## Resident of Dandora

*"Many pipes are broken and so it gets mixed up with sewage."*

## Resident of Umoja

*The boreholes have dirty water and people are not sure about what they are drinking. Also the taste of the water from the boreholes is salty. Also when it rains a lot of sewers are breaking down, and then the water in the borehole water is mixing with the sewage. It is not water you can actually drink but it is still very costly. There is also no control of this water, and if it was coming from the Ministry or the County there would be better regulation."*



## DISCONNECTION

## Slum dwellers protest over water

Supply cut off due to illegal connections and trade in the Mathare, area says company

By CASPER WAITHAKA

**T**ransport on Nairobi's Juja Road was paralysed yesterday following violent protests water disconnection.

Police were called to quell the protests and restore order on the road as Mathare slum dwellers lit fires to protest the disconnection.

Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company communications officer Grace Some-Mwangi, said the disconnection had been prompted by the operation of illegal connections by slum dwellers.

"Many residents have been selling the water and that is illegal," she said.

Police lobbed tear gas canisters as they fought running battles with the rowdy crowd. Order was restored in four hours.

The slum has had flowing water even as other city areas continue to suffer rationing due to the shortage caused by a prolonged dry spell.

The water company reconnected supply.

#### Pelted with stones

A number of people were injured and were treated at the nearby Moi Air Base dispensary and Kenyatta National Hospital.

Motorists faced the wrath of the crowd, which consisted mostly of young people, who pelted vehicles with stones and shattered windscreens.

Thieves also took advantage of the situation to steal from people caught in the ensuing confusion.

Hundreds of passengers from Huruma



**Above: Mathare residents go on the rampage yesterday after the slum's water supply was switched off over illegal connections. Police used tear gas to disperse the rowdy mob. Left: A woman washes tear gas from her child's eyes. Photos/ JAMES NJUGUNA**

were left stranded as matatus used alternative routes to escape the protests.

Ms Millicent Awori, a resident of Bondeni, said the protests were inevitable as they could not survive without water.

"It was disconnected unfairly and we do not have the money to buy the commodity at high prices," she said.

However, other residents blamed water vendors for the protests. They said the vendors had made illegal connections which they were trying to protect.

Representatives of the water company, residents and the government are expected to meet today to chart the way forward.

## What is the Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company Doing?

At ksh 2 per 20 litre jerrycan, slum dwellers pay KSh100 per m<sup>3</sup>, increasing to a massive KSh2,500 per m<sup>3</sup> when the price is at kSh50 per jerrycan. In comparison, residential customers of the Nairobi Water Company pay KSh204 for their first 6,000 l (KSh29.4 per m<sup>3</sup>), KSh53 for water use between 7,000 and 60,000 l and KSh64/m<sup>3</sup> thereafter. Those living in flats or gated communities pay KSh53 per m<sup>3</sup> for bulk supply [*“Nairobi’s water supply: 2 claims about losses & high prices in slums evaluated” Africa Check 2018*].

In Mathare, a single water tap is relied upon by an average of 315-1,500 people. The Kenyan Constitution guarantees the basic right to water, so why are residents of Eastlands left with no water? Our participatory research shows this is due to serious government neglect. NCWSC’s mission explicitly states that it intends to “provide reliable quality water and sewerage services in an environmentally friendly manner that delights customers within Nairobi City County.” In this work, it is the foremost institution charged with providing Nairobi residents with this resource.

There have been supposed efforts by the NCWSC, together with Pamoja Trust and the Water Services Trust Fund, to build water kiosks and extend the water pipeline in Mathare. However, these efforts have failed to bring about sustainable and longstanding change. The issue of water cartels, in collusion with employees at the NCWSC, continues. Above all, there does not appear to be any structural efforts to make sure areas with no water, predominantly in Eastlands, access their constitutional right: “clean, safe and adequate water.”

## Nairobi &gt;

# Kidero launches special water access ATM in war against cholera

BY MUCHEMI WACHIRA

Nairobi County has launched a special water dispenser that will ensure access to clean water as the war against cholera and other water borne diseases went a notch higher.

Residents of Mathare slums in Nairobi will use special ATM-like smart cards to access water from the dispenser that replaces water taps.

"This will enhance access to clean drinking water," said governor Evans

Kidero when he launched the new water management system that uses special technology at Mashimoni in Mathare slums on Monday.

Besides providing clean water, the new dispenser, Dr Kidero noted, is efficient and user friendly.

Residents will only require a mere 50 cents to buy a 20 litre container of water, which they will load in the smart card. The slum dwellers have been buying the same quantity of water at Sh10 from vendors

who sometimes sell conterminated water. The Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company will manage the dispenser.

Most cases of cholera reported in Nairobi over the last two months have been in slums.

## Informal settlements

The disease has so far killed 19 people in city, most of them informal settlements who rely on water from vendors.

Others fetch the water from rivers polluted with raw sewers.

"The new system will eliminate the management challenges experienced in water kiosks and benefit the residents in the informal settlements who will now buy clean water at the lowest costs," Dr Kidero said.

He added: "This system will also check water wastage while increasing revenue that the county government will use to improve water and sewerage services in all parts of the city."

The governor said his government will soon outlaw vending of water.

The project has been funded by the Danish Government and a water services firm, Grundfos Lifelink, which seeks to offer innovative and sustainable water solutions to developing countries.

Dr Kidero said the project will be spread to all other informal settlements of the city, including, Dandora, Kawangware, Kibera, Mukuru Kwa Njega and Mukuru Kwa Reuben.

At one time the NCWSC also partnered with Grundfos Life Link (GLL), a Danish company, to develop the AQtap water dispensers, commonly referred to as "water ATMs." Those were implemented in Mathare in 2015. Users bought water at the ATMs using pre-paid smart cards that they can load up with credit through a Safaricom prepaid line. The water ATMs' promise was to provide a clean, affordable, reliable source of water twenty-four hours a day. The price was fixed at 0.50 shillings for a 20 litre jerry can, and Nairobi Water would deliver the treated water directly from the Ndakaini Dam through the city's main supply lines. The ATMs would record each transaction per user, establishing a database that would document the amount of water consumed per family.

Unfortunately, we established through our collective research that the water ATMs have not been as successful as expected. Three years after their setting up, most of them are not functional since the NCWSC has not been providing efficient maintenance services. Most water ATMs are thus abandoned or transformed. In Kosovo, for example, many have been transformed into barbershops or corner shops and the tanks have been stolen. Moreover, Mathare residents shared their preference for water kiosks and not the water ATMs, even though the latter are a cheaper option. This is because they do not consider them reliable water sources. They reported that the ATM tanks were often empty for long periods.

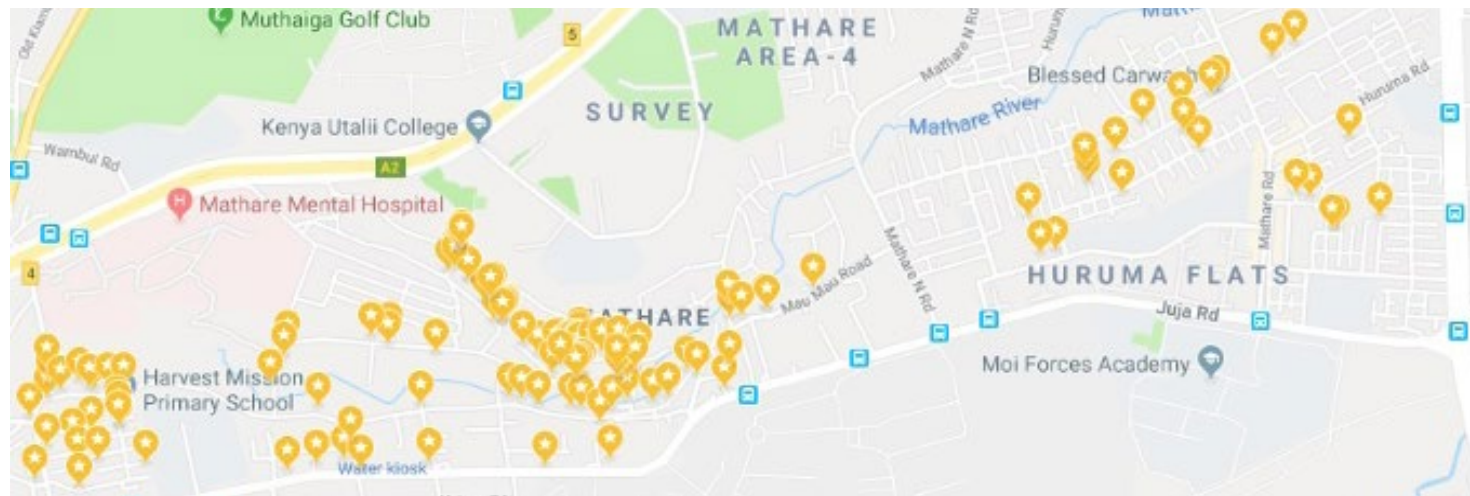
Our research also established that residents were not finding the smart card system practical since one needs to have credit on one's phone to load the smart cards.

## Analysis of Water Points in Mathare

We counted the number of water points in Mathare in order to understand the situation more clearly. Recognizing that, for example, some places in Mlango Kubwa, Huruma and Ngei have water taps within tenement *gorofa* buildings (even if they are dry) and may not require access to water points at all times, we still know, in view of the scarcity of water in Eastlands, that these water points we counted serve a majority of the population in Mathare. In total we counted:

**117 water points.**

The population in Mathare is estimated to be between 250-300,000 residents. This means that, although some people may get water delivered to them, there are periods when up to 2,560 people on average may share a single water point.<sup>1</sup>

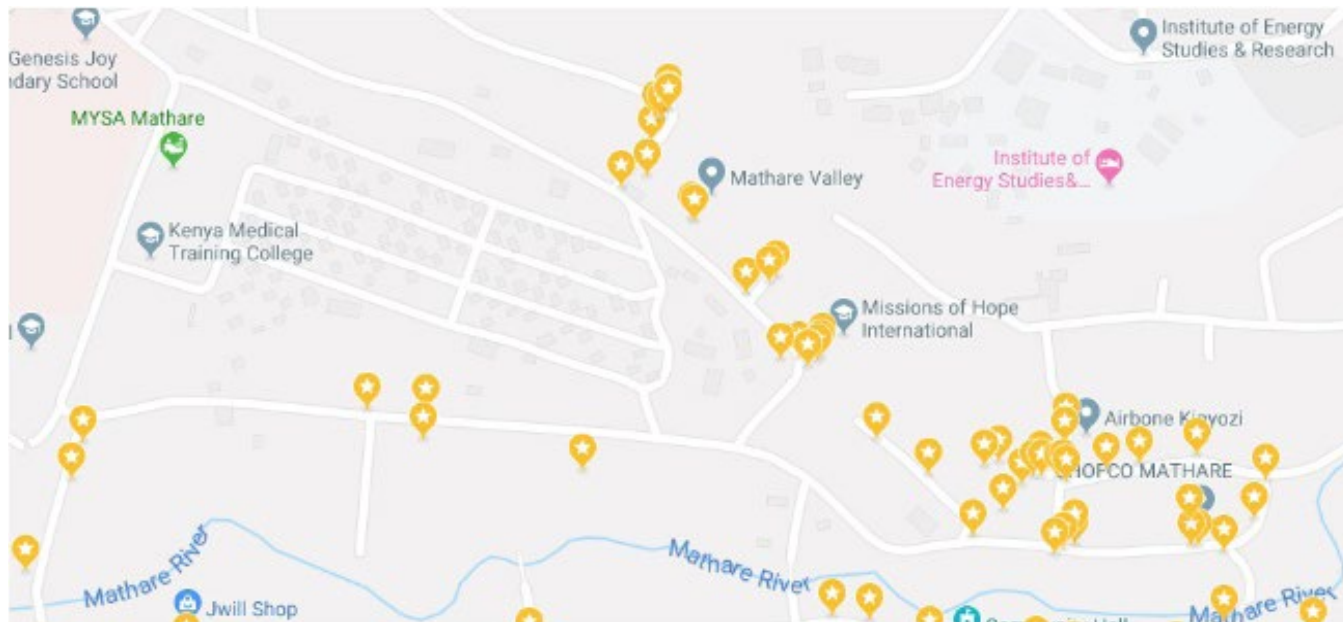


Map of Total Water Points in Mathare

<sup>1</sup> "Emergency Water Standard." United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Accessed 16 December 2018. <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/248763/emergency-water-standard>.



## Hospital Ward

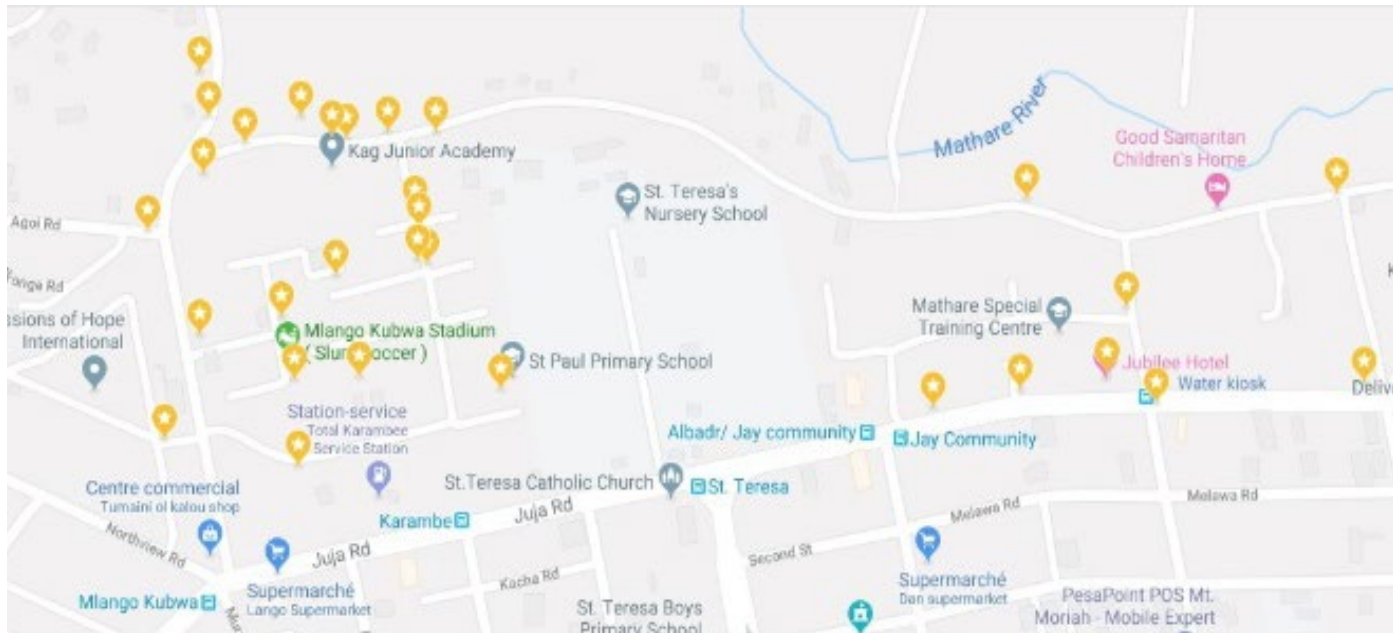


Map of Water Points in Hospital Ward

### Information

- There are 57 water points in Hospital Ward/Kosovo.
- The price is usually 2 shillings for 20 litres – with the exception of an ATM where it's sold for 0.50 shillings for 20 litres.
- The prices increase in Kosovo and vary between 2-5 shillings for 20 litres.
- During water shortages some prices remain the same whereas others increase.
- All the ATMs installed in Kosovo do not exist anymore since they were all grabbed and transformed into shops.
- Many households use private "illegal" piping that is shared.

## Mlango Kubwa

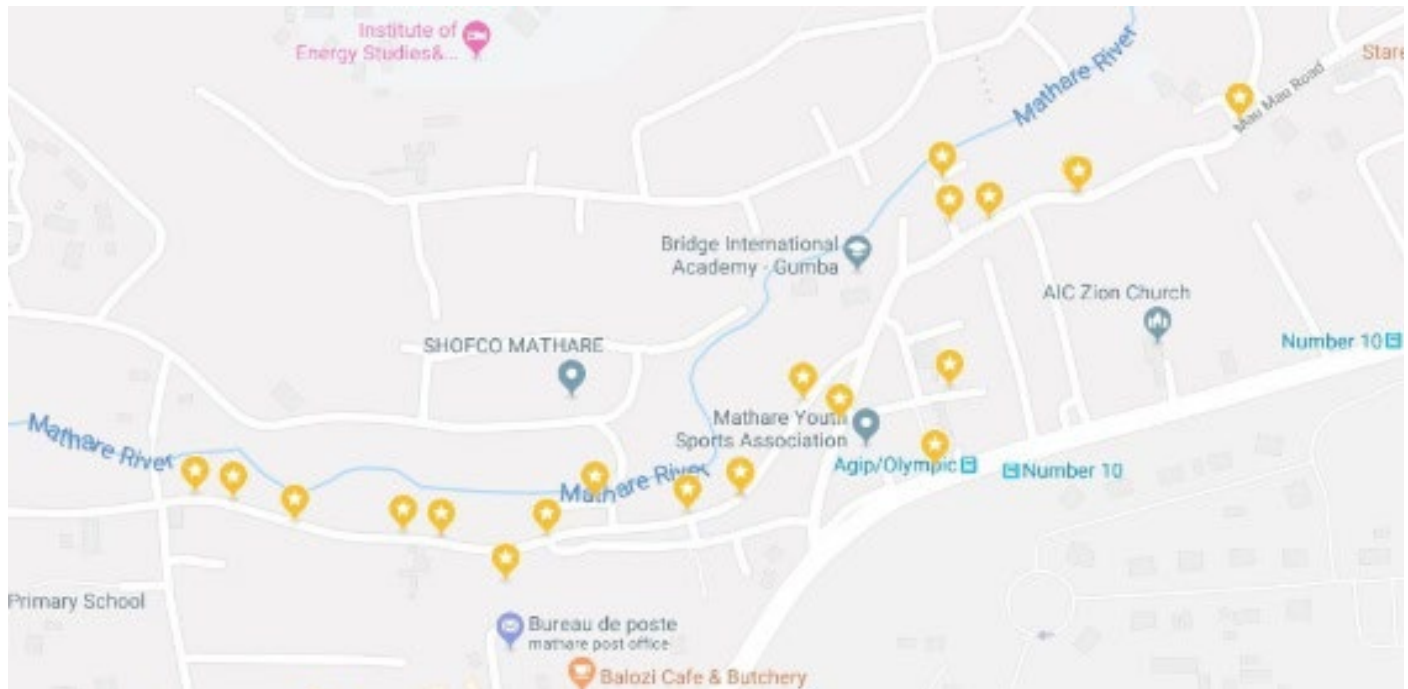


Map of Water Points in Mlango Kubwa

### Information

- There are 31 water points located in Mlango Kubwa.
- The prices are on average 5 shillings per 20 litres. However, the ATM costs 0.50 shillings per 20 litres.
- There is one "illegal" water point that is free of charge as community members contribute to the expenses collectively.
- Most water points get free water from the car wash on Agoi Road, which gets it directly from the Nairobi dam.
- There exists a lot of "illegal" piping directly into people's households.

## Mabatini Ward

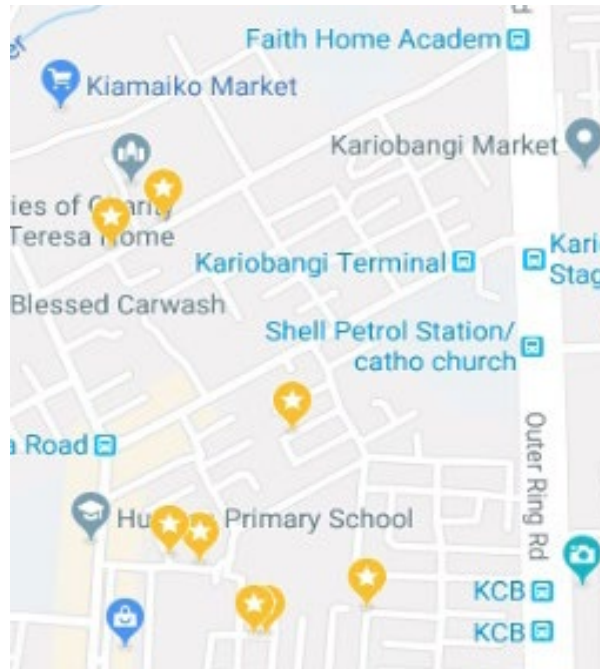


*Map of Water Points in Mabatini Ward*

### *Information*

- There are 22 water points in Mabatini Ward.
- Prices are on average are 2 shillings for 20 liters. However, the ATM costs 0.50 shillings for 20 litres.

## *Kiamaiko Ward*

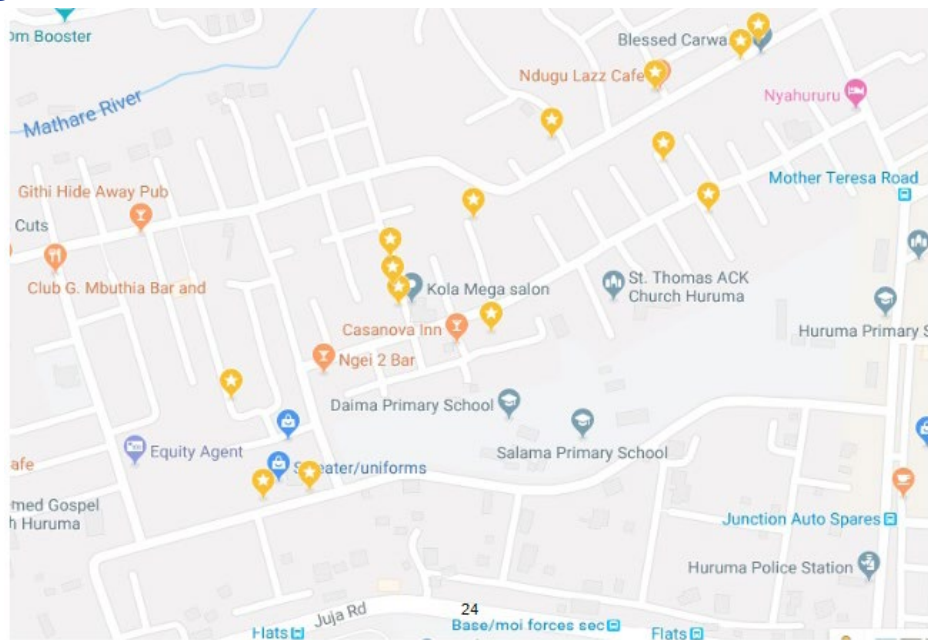


*Map of Water Points in Kiamaiko Ward*

### *Information*

- Kiamaiko has 8 water points
- Prices are on average 5 shillings for 20 litres.
- Specific areas raise their prices to 10 shillings for 20 litres.
- There are no water ATMs.
- Youth groups tend to be in charge of the water points.

## *Huruma and Ngei*



*Map of Water Points in Huruma and Ngei*

### *Information for Huruma*

- Huruma has 7 water points.
- Prices are usually 5 shillings for 20 litres. During water shortages some increase the prices to 10 shillings for 20 litres.
- There is no water ATM.
- Most of the water kiosks are located on the main street.
- Many houses are equipped with water infrastructure.

### *Information for Ngei*

- Prices are on average 5 shillings for 20 litres.
- There are no water ATMs.

## **“Highly contaminated:” MSJC’s Water Test Results**

Since there is no monitoring of the cleanliness of the water available through vendors and water points, there is a high risk of contamination depending on where the water was gotten. Even the water available at the MSJC office, which we buy from a local vendor, was tested and the results were that it was “highly contaminated” (see below). This is the same water we use to wash cups that children use and for other sanitation and consumption purposes. If there were safe, clean and adequate water for all, as entrenched in the Constitution, we would not risk our lives by using this water.



*Improvised water pipes in Mathare*



WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY	
TITLE: Water Sample Analytical Certificate - Bacteriological Results	REF. NO : F/9/1/6 ISSUE NO : 01
DEPARTMENT: Technical	REV. NO : 00
ISSUED BY: DTCM	
AUTHORISED BY : TCM	PAGE: 1 OF 2

SERIAL NO ..... Sample No. 1024

Name of Customer MATHARE SOCIAL JUSTICE Address -

CENTRE ..... County NAIROBI

Purpose of sampling: DOMESTIC Date Received: 31/10/18

Date Sampled: 31/10/2018 Date Compiled 2/11/18

Source: MATHARE SOCIAL JUSTICE WATER,  
MATHARE

Protected? YES

If so, how? PIPED  
(Is it completely covered, or sides only?)

Is there a pump? .....

If so, how long has it been in use? -

Has it been overhauled recently? -

EXACT SITE SAMPLE TAKEN FROM DRUM  
(I.e. tap in kitchen, through cistern or direct from the mains)

IS IT A CHLORINATED SUPPLY? (Indicate Residual Levels) .....

POSSIBLE SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION: -

EXAMINATION RESULTS

MPN of Coliforms organisms per 100 ml >2420

*E. Coli* per 100ml 158

Legionella spp per 100ml -

Micro-organisms -

WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY	
TITLE: Water Sample Analytical Certificate - Bacteriological Results	REF. NO : F/9/1/6 ISSUE NO : 01
DEPARTMENT: Technical	REV. NO : 00
ISSUED BY: DTCM	
AUTHORISED BY : TCM	PAGE: 2 OF 2

Name of Analyst: JACKSON KINGORI Signature 

Comments by Head of Laboratory

Highly contaminated water that should be disinfected before domestic use.

Name: JORAM KIHUMBA  
FOR: ATCM-Central water Testing Laboratories

Signature:  Date 02/11/2018

ISSUED BY:   
(DEPUTY TECHNICAL COORDINATION MANAGER)



APPROVED BY:   
(TECHNICAL COORDINATION MANAGER)

## Our Demands

1. Restructure systems to make sure that water is not privatised and is accessible to all.
2. Close bottled water companies since they are cartels.
3. Build safe, secure and adequate piped water networks in all marginalized neighbourhoods in Nairobi and in other counties, and close all cartels associated with the Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company.
4. Distribute water according to population density and not according to wealth.
5. Improve and increase sanitation facilities in all marginalized neighbourhoods to prevent diseases like cholera and typhoid.
6. Provide free health care services for those affected by inadequate and dirty water, sanitation and sewage infrastructures.
7. Improve water policies, comprehensively implement the current water legislation, and include strong people-centred accountability mechanisms.
8. Install fire hydrants in all marginalized neighbourhoods with frequent fires.
9. All water bodies should have at least three representatives from poor urban settlements on their board. These should include a woman, a community activist, and a person with a disability chosen by the community.
10. Impeachment of all presidents, governors and water company CEOs who do not implement article 43 of the Kenyan Constitution.

## Final Words

While working on this community research project on water access we heard about cartels throughout the city; of water vendors in Kamukunji Constituency who would not allow the installation of free water hydrants, in response to the many fires in that area, because they did not want residents to get free water. We read many contradictory statements from the governor, the Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company (NCWSC) and related water bodies. We also heard about how water pipes that were not repaired or mixed with sewage; we listened to how poor people were still paying for no water; we read about how access to water had fallen in the 1990s compare to the 1980s; we heard about the fears that the County has about “non-revenue water,” but mostly we were told about children and adults falling sick, and how the rising costs and shortages made mothers sometimes choose between washing their babies and cooking food.

For us, we don’t need many statements and explanations about fears of leakages, we just need water. We would also like to know: if the estimated county budget for “water resources management” between 2016/2017 was Ksh 411,000,000, and estimates for 2018/2019 are Ksh 360,000,000<sup>1</sup>, where does this money go since we in Eastlands still have no water? We would also like to know why the Government, both County and National, talk about water in the Constitution, Vision 2030 and when signing the MDGs and SDGs, but actually don’t care that the majority of Nairobi and the country don’t have access to clean, safe and adequate water? We would also like to protest that the Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company is a company and not a service.

As this participatory report shows, many in Nairobi are still struggling for water, for dignity, for their children and their livelihoods. Without it they can’t wash school uniforms, themselves or their children. They also can’t put out fires. And, what is more, much of the water that is available is making them sick: it is majisiko sure (“water not so sure”), and there is also rationing in scarcity that makes water in our communities cost, atleast, over 4 times more than actual water provision in rich areas.

Close to half of the Kenyan population still have unequal access to water. In being part of this percentage, that has lost family members because of an unclean and an inconsistent supply, we remember them. And together we say and demand: Maji ni Uhai, Maji ni Haki.

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1 Nairobi City County. 2016/2017. Financial Estimates Program Based Budget. Available at: <http://www.hakijamii.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/The-Nairobi-City-County-Performance-Based-Budget-FINAL-WEB-VERSION-1.pdf> & Nairobi City County. 2018/201. Program Based Budget. Available at: <https://nairobiassembly.go.ke/download/program-based-budget-fy-2018-19/>



## **Acknowledgments**

*Thank you to all the residents from across Eastlands and beyond who contributed to this report.*

*Thank you to all of those who came to the Maji ni Haki Campaign meetings. And a special thank you to Aileen, Martin, Faith Kasina, Summeya, Wyban, Harri, Chloe, Margritt, Yvette, Osodo, Yash and Jill Ghai, Hugo, Annie Pfingst and Kongo Mwaura for many of the pictures, Tom Wein and Rachel Strohm for the consistent support. We also give a hearty thanks to Fiona Napier who continues to help us with our bids to get water for our centre.*

*We hope this is one step towards documenting and contributing to the struggle for water in Eastlando and for all of those struggling to get this human and constitutional right.*

*Together we say: **Maji ni Uhai na Maji ni Haki!***

