

LAUNCH OF SOLAR POWERED WATER DESALINATION PLANT AL – MAHDI CENTRE SAMBURU





Samburu Village in Kwale county marked a momentous occasion on the 22nd of August 2023 with the launching of a state-of-the-art desalination plant at the Al-Mahdi centre which has the capacity to generate 4,000 litres of potable water every hour. For a community that has been struggling with water scarcity for decades, this plant offers a vital lifeline. The project was successfully completed through collaborative efforts between Bilal Muslim Mission of Kenya (BMMK), The Lady Fatemah Trust, The Zahra Trust and Boreal Light GmbH, a Berlin based company specializing in renewable energy solutions for water treatment facilities.



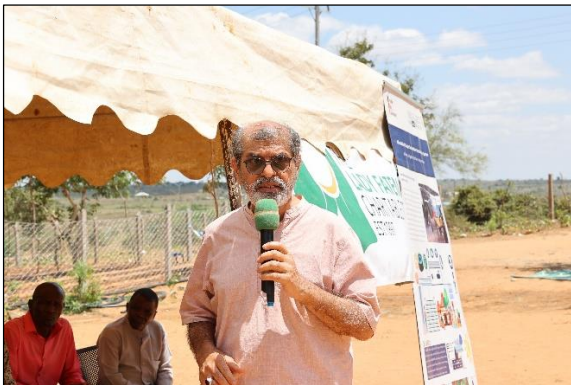
Deputy governor of Kwale county, Josphat Chirema Kombo cuts the ribbon to officially launch the desalination plant flanked by Dr Hamed Beheshti of Boreal Light GmbH.

The occasion commenced at 11 am with Christian and Muslim prayers followed by some short speeches. Other items on the agenda were tree planting by some of the distinguished guests and sampling of the new clean water.

Distinguished guests attending the event included H.E Josphat Chirema Kombo, Deputy governor of Kwale county and Honorable Hemed Mwabudzo, C.E.C.M Water Services Department. Al Hajj Iqbal Sunderji and Al hajj Murtaza Jaffer, Chairman and CEO respectively at BMMK were also present together with Dr Hamed Beheshti, CEO of Boreal Light GmbH. Seyyid Abidi, the Chairman of Al Kisa foundation in America was one of the invited guests.



Local community members supported the event in large numbers and clergy from local mosques and churches also gave encouragement. Local government officials were enthusiastic and pledged their support to actively raise awareness within the community. Deputy governor Kombo congratulated BMMK for its contributions in the health, education, economic empowerment and water and sanitation sectors. Bilal Kenya's CEO Al Hajj Murtaza Jaffer commended the project as a significant step towards sustainable development and urged the local community to take ownership of this vital resource.



BMMK had initially embarked on a solution to the water crisis in 1995 by establishing a connection to the Mazeras water pipeline. More recently in September 2021 a hydrogeological survey at the Al-Mahdi centre determined an optimal borehole drilling site. Further investigation led to the identification of an exact location for drilling and this was successfully achieved to a depth of 180 meters on the 10th of February 2022 with support from The Lady Fatemah Charitable Trust. We now had a source of water for the desalination plant. Rigorous pumping tests and water quality analyses ensued not long after by the installation of the desalination plant.



Impact

- **Improved community welfare** - Over 500 families are now able to access safe and affordable drinking water; coupled with better Sanitation and hygiene this will result in fewer waterborne diseases and an overall healthier community.
- **Ecologically responsible farming** - A tomato farm has been started at the centre in which an efficient drip irrigation system delivers water and nutrients directly to the root zone. There are plans to venture into Salicornia farming in the near future, making maximum use of the waste salty water arising from the desalination process.
- **Economic opportunities** - Several community members involved in water supply are able to generate an income for themselves when they deliver water to locations situated further away from the desalination plant using different means of transport.
- **Revitalized tree planting initiative** - There is renewed hope for a previously struggling tree planting initiative at the Al-Mahdi centre. New seedlings were planted on the day of the launch.

