The Samburu Indigenous Community Kenya

By:

Lilian

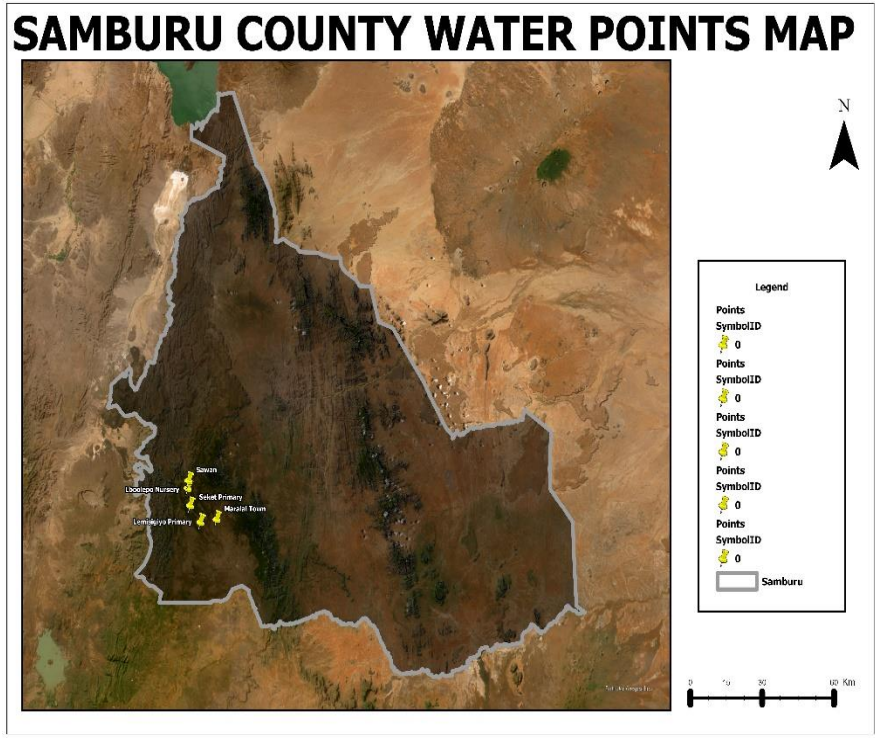
Founder Women Conserve – Samburu, Kenya

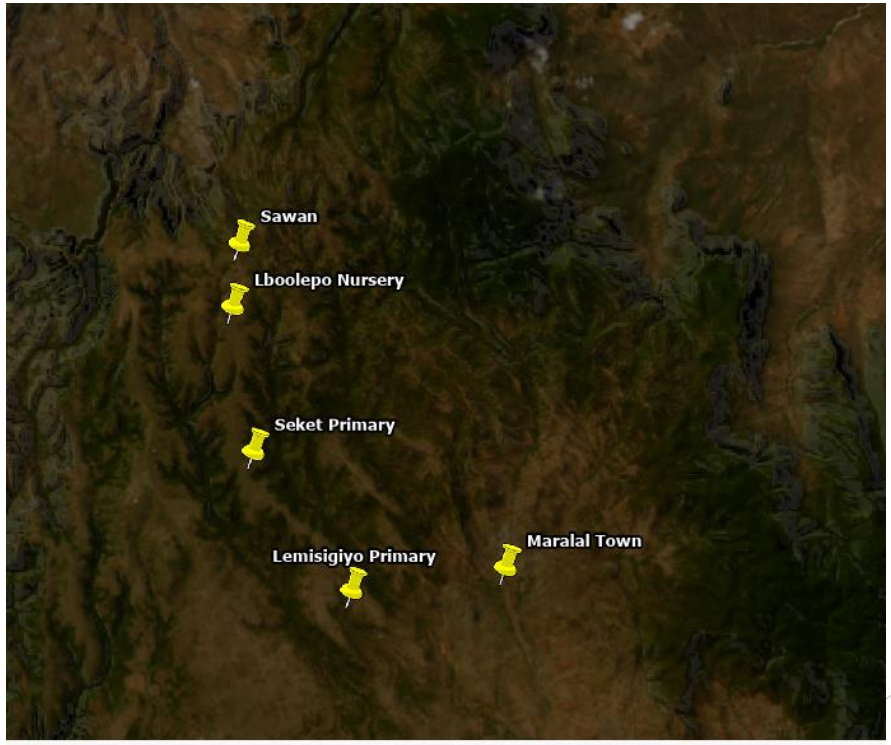
The Samburu Community - Kenya

- Nilotic ethnic community of North Central Kenya
- *Lokop* – Owners of the land
- Language – Maa speakers (*maasai*)
- Dress – Red *shukas*, adorn themselves with necklaces, bracelets and anklets mostly from beads
- Livelihood – Nomadic pastoralists (Cows, goats, sheep and camel) – Food – Milk, meat and blood
- Organization – Age groups and age sets (*Morans/worriors* – Security), circumcision, polygamy
- Religion – Traditional believers, God – *Nkai living in mountains*

Place of Samburu Community in Kenya (Samburu County)

SAMBURU COUNTY MAPS





The Samburus - Pictures

Lilian Interacting with Samburu Morans

Samburu woman drinking well water

Introduction - Outer Space

- It is the expanse that exists beyond Earth and its atmosphere including moon, stars etc.
- Interaction to the outer space is inevitable to mankind
- Interaction – Positively? Negatively? For Survival?
- Co-existence with wild animals, sometimes conflict as wild animals preys on livestock and crops
- Changes in the climatic and environmental conditions are inevitable – seasonal and sometimes harsh and calls for divine intervention
- Sacred places – For prayers to the supreme being and for cultural ceremonies

How does our community relate to space

Land, Water point, Forest, Trees etc

- Land – largely communally owned in form of group ranches, Cultivation (At some arable places), source of pasture for the livestock
- Water – Source of domestic and livestock water, includes rivers, dams, wells
- Forests and trees – Pastures for the livestock, firewood, building materials, shed, fruits, artefacts and medicine
- Roles - Women fetch water for domestic use and men take animals for pasture and water. The community live and coexist with the wildlife,
- Sacred places – Big mountains, rocks and water masses – For prayers seeking for divine intervention and sacrifices to God as they believe that God created the universe and everything on it.
- Heavenly bodies – Moon, sun, stars, planets and other components of the sky – Good sources of weather prediction

Relations of our Community to the environment

- They believe God created trees, grass and all in the world
- Samburus are conservationist by nature, they coexist and protect the wild animals and fence out the water points
- They protect the environment. They discourage irresponsible destruction of trees, animals and water points
- They value water and that's why they share water with wildlife.
- The land, water, trees and everything in the world belongs to God and its their mandate to protect it

Relations of the Community to the environment Cont'd

Water, trees, moon, stars, birds, Insects and animals

- Trees – Provide shed (Elderly to rest underneath) and to animals, flowering or shading of leaves are signs of short rains on the way, roots and barks are medicinal, for building homes
- Water masses – Source of water for domestic use, for animals and for cultural events
- Moon and the stars – For mapping out the rains – Certain moon appearances and star patterns signifies coming of the rains and droughts, conflict and other activities respectively
- Change in wind intensity and directions – tells the coming rains or coming drought and possible direction to migrate to for pastures
- Birds, insects – Small God made creatures whose appearance, sounds (singing birds) or disappearance means weather changes

Water an Important Commodity

Water is life both for the community and the animals.

- Women and girls are responsible to get water and firewood for the family, though sometimes they also look after the livestock should men be insufficient or held elsewhere
- Drought – They pray and sing songs of praise to God at big mountains and at water masses requesting for rain mercy – See videos
- God is great – Rarely does that water from rivers, dams and wells that's shared with livestock and wildlife get contaminated and affect the community

Water an Important Commodity

Samburu Women - Prayer Songs

Women are the one who feel the burden of fetching water.

How Our Community Protect/Preserve their land and water

- Fencing of homesteads using thorny branches, stones/rocks
- Fencing of water points using thorny branches, stones/rocks
- In open water Sources, designated entry points for livestock and the opposite entry for fetching water for domestic use
- Use of water troughs to water cattle and ensure minimal misuse of water from wells during the dry season
- Alternating of pasture areas – restricting some places not to be grazed on during the rainy seasons for use during the dry spells
- Pasture invested and prevalent with livestock pests (e.g.Ticks) are burnt during the dry season
- Mountains and thick forests with adverse climatic conditions and infested with pests are avoided during the adverse conditions and manifestation of pests

Future plans

Reduce the walking distance

Provide clean water to the communities

separate the water for domestic and animals use

Collaborate with other partners to build capacity of communities on water management.

Develop integration message to educate women an girls on their role in water management.

End

Questions?