



## Samburu Women Trust

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March 8, 2024

Your Excellency,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me immense pleasure to celebrate with you today as we commemorate both International Women's Day and the Ilchamus Cultural Festival. I am deeply inspired by the dedication and spirit demonstrated by the Ilchamus Women and Youth Organization in making this event a reality. Today, as we come together, we not only celebrate the achievements of women worldwide but also honor the rich cultural heritage of the Ilchamus people.

International Women's Day, observed annually on March 8th, serves as a poignant reminder to recognize, connect, and celebrate the myriad accomplishments of women globally, both big and small. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all individuals and organizations, including our partners, the County government of Baringo, and various state and non-state actors, whose unwavering support has made this celebration possible. Your contributions are instrumental in shaping a world founded on principles of dignity and equality.

As we commemorate International Women's Day, it is imperative to acknowledge and celebrate the resilience of indigenous women—individuals who confront and overcome adversities on a daily basis. These women embody strength, courage, and determination in the face of numerous challenges.

Reflecting on the pressing issues confronting indigenous women, I wish to underscore the following:

- 1.Land Rights: Urgent action is needed to address the precarious land situation that plagues many indigenous communities, often leading to conflicts, displacement, and loss of lives. It is imperative that we prioritize efforts to resolve these land disputes and safeguard the rights of indigenous peoples.
- 2.Climate Change: Indigenous communities are disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate change. We must empower these communities with the necessary tools and resources to mitigate the effects of climate change while preserving their traditional coping mechanisms, particularly those held by indigenous women, and ensuring their intellectual property rights are recognized.



3.Indigenous Women Leadership: It is essential for counties to actively recognize and incorporate the leadership and contributions of indigenous women in local development initiatives. This includes ensuring their representation in decision-making processes, employment opportunities, and the collection of accurate data to better understand and address their needs.

4.Cultural Identity Preservation: The county government plays a crucial role in preserving and protecting the rich cultural heritage of indigenous communities. I urge the authorities to designate specific days for indigenous communities to come together, celebrate their traditions, and impart knowledge to future generations.

In conclusion, I extend my warmest wishes for a memorable Cultural Festival and International Women's Day celebration. Let us continue to champion the rights and empowerment of women, particularly those belonging to indigenous communities, as we strive for a more just and equitable society.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane Naini Meriwas".

Jane Naini Meriwas HSC  
Executive Director/IWC Convener