

WATAMU POWER PETITION

MAY 2025

Prepared by

**WATAMU
ASSOCIATION**

Submitted to

**The Managing Director,
Kenya Power**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND
OF THE PETITION 1

WHAT WE ARE
ASKING FOR 2

DAILY REALITY 3

EVIDENCE OF
IMPACT 4

KPLC SERVICE
EFFICIENCY 7

IMPACT STORIES 8

OUR ASK 10

BACKGROUND OF THE PETITION

Watamu, once a small fishing village, has grown into a thriving holiday destination and subsequently gaining the status of municipality. This growth has in turn provided many residents employment with fishermen still able to earn their living.

However, this rapid continued growth has stretched the power infrastructure beyond its limits. So five years ago we started recording how many outages were reported every day.

The situation has continually deteriorated to the point of unacceptable and unusable supply.

Our request is clear, urgent, and backed by five years of recorded data and the daily experiences of the people of Watamu.



The Watamu Association, on behalf of residents, business owners and community stakeholders, submits this petition to the Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC) following a well-documented process that has highlighted the persistent and worsening issues with electricity supply in Watamu.



WHAT WE ARE ASKING FOR

1. STABILIZATION AND REINFORCEMENT OF THE MAIN POWER LINE SERVING WATAMU.

2. PERMANENT STATIONING OF A KPLC SERVICE VEHICLE AND TECHNICAL TEAM IN WATAMU.

These two requests have been raised repeatedly over the years and even promised by KPLC leadership, yet remain unfulfilled. Mainline failures continue to cause outages, while the absence of a local technical team leads to long delays for simple repairs.

Implementing these practical solutions would bring immediate and meaningful improvement to Watamu's power reliability.

DAILY REALITY IN WATAMU

On average in the last 12 months :

- **Power outages are reported on 28 out of 31 days per month by at least one person in Watamu**
- **11 days/month involve multiple households**
- **8 days/month attributed to mainline faults**

Frequent voltage fluctuations damage appliances and create health/safety risks

ENGAGEMENT HISTORY WITH KPLC

- **4 years of outreach to County , Regional and Corporate KPLC offices**
- **Monthly reports shared with Kilifi branch**
- **Repeated meetings held**
- **Promises made publicly — hard to quantify delivery**

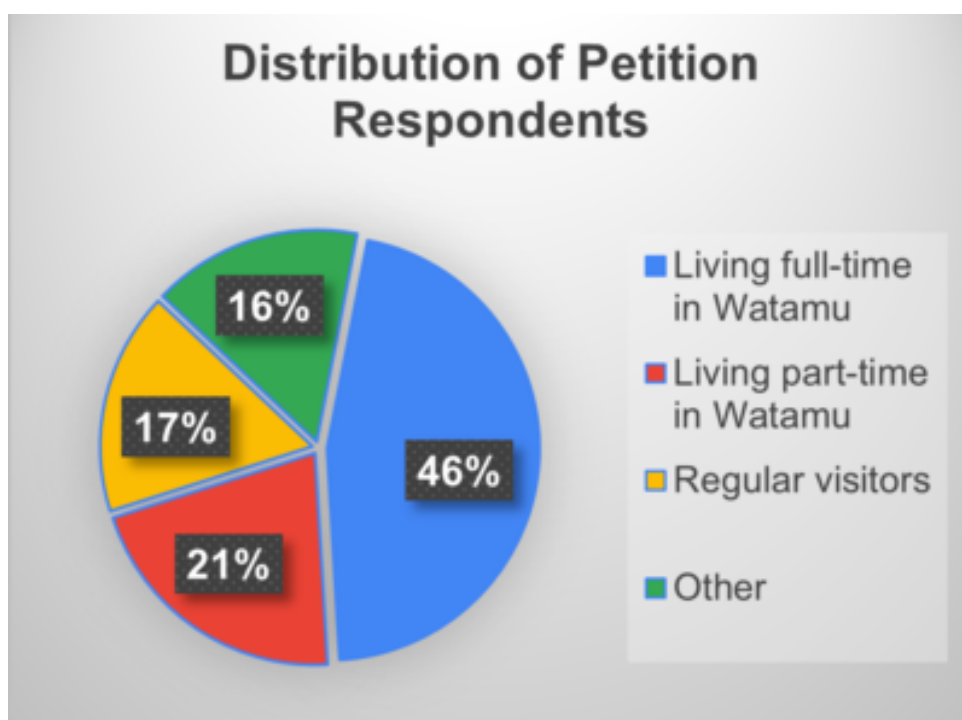


EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

The petition launched to highlight Watamu's ongoing power issue. It gathered **640** online responses which were received in 8 days.

The petition drew responses from a diverse range of individuals connected to Watamu and its supporters

- **46% Full-time residents**
- **21% Part-time residents**
- **17% Regular visitors**
- **16% Others**





EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

EFFECTS OF POWER FLUCTUATIONS

Disruptions Impact	Number of Instances
Business Disruptions	343
Damaged Appliances	492
Created Security Concerns	311
Education Disruptions	127
Had to look for alternative power solution	458
Health Centre Disruptions	107
Loss of Income	236

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT CONTINUED

The data from the petition reveals the real and ongoing toll that unreliable electricity has on daily life in Watamu. Residents and business owners reported widespread disruptions across multiple sectors, with **damaged appliances** selected **492 times**.

Reliance of alternative power was selected in **458 instances**, emerging as the second most frequently cited issue. This will not only increase household and business expenses, but also reflect the unstable power supply that make normal operations nearly impossible.

Business disruptions were reported in **343 instances**, **loss of income 236 times**, further underscoring the strain placed on entrepreneurs, shop owners, and workers who depend on a stable power supply to earn a living.

Security concerns (311 instances) and **health centre disruptions (107 instances)** illustrate the broader community impact—where unreliable power jeopardizes both public safety and access to essential services. The fact that **educational disruptions** were reported by **127 respondents** is particularly troubling, especially in a growing municipality where children and youth require a stable learning environment powered by consistent electricity to succeed.

The frequency and range of these disruptions are not just inconvenient; they are unacceptable for a community that has grown into a thriving municipality. Watamu's rapid development has outpaced an overstretched and outdated power infrastructure, leaving residents and businesses to bear the cost of constant outages, voltage fluctuations, damaged appliances, and lost income.

We appreciate the efforts of the local KPLC team in trying to maintain the system with limited resources, but their efforts are simply not enough. It is clear that the situation will not improve without a permanent KPLC service vehicle and technical team stationed in Watamu, as well as an upgrade to the mainline supply to ensure a stable and reliable power source.

WHAT THE PETITION REVEALED ABOUT KPLC'S SERVICE EFFICIENCY

Supplementary questions were circulated to gather specific feedback on KPLC's response to localised power outages. Respondents were asked to share their experience on how long it takes for KPLC engineers to respond and resolve issues after a power outage is reported.

Key Findings:

- **Engineer Arrival Time-** Most respondents indicated it typically takes six hours for KPLC engineers to respond to a localized power outage.
- **Repair Duration-** Respondents reported that power is usually restored in under two hours ,once the engineers get on site, highlighting that the primary delay lies in response time rather than repair work itself.

WHY A LOCAL CREW MATTERS

A localized crew would significantly reduce response time, ensuring that minor issues are resolved quickly and efficiently—minimizing business disruptions, appliance damage, and loss of income. Watamu's growing population and critical role in the region's tourism and local economy warrant immediate investment in a permanent KPLC presence within the community

THE IMPACT OF UNRELIABLE POWER ON WATAMU RESIDENTS

“Consistently without power which also means fridges are off for extended periods resulting loss of food, fans do not work resulting in a loss of personal amenity and lack of sleep impacting health”

Impact Story

“Running a business in Watamu is very very difficult with power issues. And cost my business a lot of money and complaints from guests.”

Impact Story

“I run a business in Watamu and some of our appliances are in 3 phases. 98% of my problems as a business owner are directly related to KPLC. It's unsustainable and we are worried that it will only get worse given the number of constructions going on.”

Impact Story

“My father who lives in Watamu permanently is disabled and has health problems, it is not safe for him, plus he can't shower with hot water etc”

Impact Story

“We have tourists who rent our house and they negatively impacted as well as having a bad impression of beautiful Kenya.”

Impact Story

“We are unable to pump water from the community bore hole to serve our home with this precious commodity whenever there is an outage of electricity. Water is life!”

Impact Story

THE IMPACT OF UNRELIABLE POWER ON WATAMU RESIDENTS

“Often when we have planned a whole evening's programme and invited people to screen an educational episode for discussion, the whole evening is ruined when the power suddenly dies. A great disappointment. Also, my son has online courses which he suddenly is cut off from. These are the worst.”

Impact Story

“These power disruptions do not happen at the same frequency elsewhere in Kenya so this is straight lack of support from KPLC to Watamu”

Impact Story

*“Gestisco un piccolo hotel. Questa continua mancanza di elettricità sta creando disagio ai miei ospiti e sta danneggiando fortemente il mio business (**I run a small hotel. This constant lack of electricity is creating inconvenience for my guests and is seriously damaging my business**)”*

Impact Story

“Tourists rent out house which disrupts their stay and give a bad impression of our country.”

Impact Story

“We're not asking for the impossible — just a basic, reliable service and clear communication. Making our voices heard is the least we can do.”

Impact Story

“My child is on oxygen support and without power the machines don't run”

Impact Story

OUR MAIN ASKS

- 1. Authorize capital investment to upgrade and stabilize mainline and backup supply lines to Watamu.**
- 2. Allocate and deploy a KPLC vehicle and staff to be permanently based in Watamu**

These asks are focused, actionable solutions that can deliver immediate improvements, particularly because Kilifi County has already received funding to address the main power supply line, and the County Business Manager publicly assured residents during open meetings in February 2025 that a dedicated vehicle and technical crew would be deployed to Watamu!

WE WANT WATAMU TO BE A THRIVING PLACE TO LIVE AND VISIT BUT THAT REQUIRES THE BASIC POWER SERVICES TO BE RELIABLE



CONTACT US
EMAIL

info@watamuassociation.com