

**TITLE OF PROJECT: MAJI SAFI, ELIMU BORA: CLEAN WATER FOR A BETTER EDUCATION**

**COUNTRY: KENYA**

**NOMINATING COLLEGE: VASSAR COLLEGE**

**DESIGNATED PROJECT LEADER: Joram Bosire, Kenya, Vassar College**

**SUMMARY:**

Maji Safi, Elimu Bora is a project that was implemented in a village in the rural areas of western Kenya to utilize the high rainfall levels to provide a reliable source of water for the major schools in the area and the community in general. The main goal of the project is to reduce the reliance on the unreliable water provided by the local government and enable the area to have a sustainable source of water that utilizes natural resources.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

*a) How did you decide what issue you wanted to address and what approach or strategies you chose to implement your project?*

The water inaccessibility problem in Kenya has been a problem across the country for decades. The national government has taken a few steps towards improving this especially the past few years, however it's mostly urban areas that reap the benefits of the government's investments. For my project, I decided to come up with an idea that would need minimal government involvement and would also be sustainable in the long run. The approach I used was conceived from a rainwater collection project I had worked on with my father in Nairobi on his farm. With my father's help, I was able to come up with a similar rainwater collection plan but on a bigger scale.

*b) Why did you choose your host site? In what ways did local relationships support you or contribute to the project?*

Bosamaro village is where my father grew up. I visit the village every year and I can witness firsthand all the problems they go through with water supply and how it affects the children and community. It was always my desire to find a way to help the kids in the area, but I never really had any resources to implement something of such a scale. My father's (and mine) close relationship with them made it easy to get permission from the local municipality to implement the project. It was also helpful in enabling us to get local labor and resources to use in the construction phase of the project rather than having to depend on expensive outsourced options. The school headteachers were very grateful for the help and provided all the support we could possibly need from them.

*c) What changes or adjustments did you make to your original plans, and why?*

My initial budget plan did not account for taxes hence I had to use the emergency funds and reduce the capacity of some of the tanks in the school with the lowest population.

*d) Did other fundraising efforts contribute to your project? What were they?*

There were no other fundraising efforts

*e) Are there opportunities for continuing your work on this issue? If so, please describe.*

Since I visit Bosamaro village occasionally, I can visit the project sites in future to see the impact it has had on the community. It will also provide an opportunity to further educate the children on the importance of clean water and sanitation.

## **REFLECTION:**

*a) How do you define peace?*

Peace means providing a conducive environment for everyone to live together in harmony with each other. This involves ensuring that everyone can access at the very least the most basic needs that enable them to live their day to day lives.

*b) In what ways might your project contribute to peace? What changes occurred? Short-term? Long-term?*

In the short term, the project will provide a stable source of clean water for the schools and community around to use. I will also decrease inter-community conflicts at the scarce boreholes available in the area. In the long run, it will decrease school dropout rates and communicable disease infection rates among children in the area. I also hope that the long run success of the project would inspire local governments to implement similar projects in different areas of the country.

*c & d) What did you learn about the dilemmas, challenges, or conflicts that underlie the targeted issues or utilized approaches/strategies? Has your project changed the way you think about the world? How has the project changed, challenged, or inspired you?*

From my experience working on this project, I have learnt that a lot of the problems we see in this world are probably viewed as low priority by many and it's up to willing individuals or groups to take the initiative to help wherever and however they can to promote peace around the world. There are many simple, brilliant, and sustainable ideas out there waiting to be implemented, it's just up to us to identify and utilize them. This project has inspired me to take more initiative in future to try help others whichever way I can. I may not always have 10000 dollars at my disposal to aid a community, but there certainly other ways that I can work to make the world a more peaceful place.

## **PERSONAL STATEMENT**

“The best way to promote peace is by starting from your own small community at home. It doesn't have to be a massive and sophisticated thing, even a simple, creative idea growing in your mind could be the key to impacting the lives of people for years to come.”

-Joram Bosire, Vassar class of 2024