

Kenya Well Project Proposal

Neema Scott
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Stacy Hagenbaugh
Career Development Office

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Dear Ms. Hagenbaugh,

In the east African country of Kenya, confrontations over water resources have made sustained peace virtually unattainable. The increase in global temperature has resulted in a dramatic decrease of water availability in this arid landscape, resulting in violent disputes. Conflicts over water access have caused the displacement and death of countless people across the country. Much of the violence and chaos can be solved by simply bringing water to these distressed communities. By strategically placing wells on both sides of high conflict areas, water will no longer be a factor in the conflicts and violence should dramatically minimize. If approved for the Project for Peace grant, I and my associates will travel to Kenya to construct wells and help bring peace to the country.

In the past two years, more than 120 people have died as a result of fighting in villages in the Isiolo¹, Nakuru², and Marsabit³ Districts (see figure 1). In the Nakuru township of Mai Mahiu, 22 people were killed as a result of violence which erupted when Maasai tribesmen crossed the Kikuyu border to secure water from a river which they felt the Kikuyu's hoarded. A similar story is told in Sambarwawa, a village in the Isiolo district. In this village, water levels dropped dramatically inspiring more border crossing, resulting in the deaths of 7 people. And tragically, in the town of Turbi in the Marsabit district, over 77 people lost their lives as a result of fighting over water access between Borana and Gabra peoples.

While the cause of these violent clashes is rooted in many complex historical factors, limited water access is a dynamic common to all locations. Therefore, I believe that placing wells on both sides of these problem areas may significantly reduce violence, as water will more readily be available to all in need. If approved, I would work with the experienced humanitarians Mr. Terry Waller (of *Water for All*⁴) and Dr. Cathy Fitzgerald (experienced in third world well construction).

In third world countries, building a single well typically requires heavy machinery and over \$1,500. However, Terry Waller has developed a strategy which allows the construction of manually drilled wells in third world countries for less than \$350 per

well. His revolutionary, Christian based initiative focuses on constructing and teaching impoverished citizens of third world countries an inexpensive means of obtaining water. He and his associates have drilled over 2,000 wells across the globe, mostly (1,800) in Bolivia, however 5 successful wells in western Kenya. With their help, we could not only bring water to these impoverished areas and therefore meet the goals of *Water for All*, but also expand their work to bring peace to these desolate areas of Kenya.

Upon reaching Kenya, myself, Mr. Waller, Dr. Fitzgerald, and associates, would purchase the supplies for the wells (which are readily available in large cities) and travel to the three conflict villages to teach the locals how to construct wells. It typically takes one week to complete each well. The plan is to build two wells per community, and leave the drill rig (which drills the hole) as well as enough supplies for the locals to build two additional wells after we leave. Supplies for future wells are relatively easy to come by and cost no more than \$100. All together, the project (well construction and travel time) should take approximately eight weeks to complete. Assuming we depart in mid-June, it is expected that the project should be completed by mid-August.

Dr. Fitzgerald has been in contact with the Jones family of Nairobi. The Jones' have offered aid our project in organizing the on location logistics upon arriving. They are quite connected in the community and will aid us not only in transportation and planning, but also with contacting persons from the villages of interest. In addition to the Jones', my contacts from an earlier visit to the country last summer will also be of great support to the project and aid in its success.

Upon completion of the project, it is expected that the violent conflicts of the Isiolo, Nakuru, and Marsabit Districts should decrease. Local members of the communities will continue to drill wells after our departure, making water available to more people across the country. More plants and animals will survive, therefore also decreasing the famine of locals who struggle to keep livestock and crops alive. Overall, the project will change lives and peace, in more way than one, will come to these areas of Kenya.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to the opportunity to further discussion of the Kenya Well Project.

Sincerely,

Neema Dawn Scott