

# Community Based Research Program Applying Design Thinking to Help Empower Women and Girls in Kenya



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## A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This program brings the *Wisconsin Idea* to Kenya through connecting UW Madison students with the people of Kenya who have the common goal of empowering girls, fostering capacity building, and helping create sustainable livelihoods for their families. The program provides opportunities for students to work on supporting women and girls through addressing the some of the following issues: 1) providing support for sustaining wellbeing, 2) sustainable agriculture and food security, 3) microenterprise and product development, 4) water collection and transportation.

### This program meets several of the Design Studies Department at the School of Human Ecology strategic goals:

1. To Become a Leader in International Design Education Experience
2. Become a leader in globally aware, socially conscious design education and practice
3. Become a leader in our fields, known for our educational innovation, entrepreneurial (flexible / nimble) thinking, and ability to respond to continuous change within design pedagogy, instruction, and practice.
4. Emphasize and increase interdisciplinary practice activities and projects.
5. Integrate real world projects into the curriculum.
6. Global prominence in design education known for producing design leaders

### Program Goals:

1. Students will develop strong problem solving skills through the human centered design process.
2. Students will gain a global perspective working with a community in Kenya and will become familiar with historical and cultural precedents as a means to inform their design decisions.
3. Students will develop their critical thinking and design skills to produce successful prototypes for TWMS.
4. Students will become skilled collaborators across disciplines
5. Students will learn by doing

### Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will **apply the design thinking process** as it relates to the person (people) in need and the fulfillment of worthwhile community goals for the health and welfare of the women and children.
2. Students will **develop fitting and sustainable solutions to a specific problem** for people in Kenya.
3. Students will become **adept at taking on the point of view of the user** as a means to solve real world problems.
4. To provide the opportunity for students to live with and engage with on a daily basis, Kenyan people and communities by experiencing firsthand cultural differences and similarities with respect to their own, and developing a better understanding of the country and its peoples and how this understanding can and should inform design making decisions.

## **B. PROGRAM GOALS AND UNIQUE FEATURES**

This program provides the opportunity to work with three grassroots programs in Kenya. Students will learn from Aniceta Kiriga, the founder of The Tharaka Women's Health Program (TWWP) in Tharaka Nithi Kenya about the harmful practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). They will also work with women who are part of adult literacy groups on product development opportunities such as, soap and basket making. Students will visit with the Samburu Girls Foundation (SGF) in Samburu County. Since 2014, Founder Josephine Kulea has been rescuing girls from the harmful cultural practices of FGM, beading, and child marriage. Here, students will work with the girls on designing an education center, self-esteem and empowerment issues, and product development. In addition, students will live with Julius and Lydia Githaiga in Nyeri County where they will learn about the Green Belt Movement, tree planting, food security, and community development.

Other experiences include: a visit to Nymbani Orphanage for HIV+ children, Generations Orphanage, Giraffe Sanctuary, the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Elephant Orphanage, and Thompson Falls.

## **C. ACADEMIC MATTERS**

- **Orientation:** Two meetings will be held to get the students acquainted with the program and prepared for the trip.
- **Courses:** while there are no formal courses connected to this trip, workshops may will be held to train the students on how to make solar powered lamps, self-esteem and empowerment issues, and product development.
- **General academic concerns/issues:** none

## **D. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

- **Housing and meals:** All housing and meals are provided\*. The trip includes five nights in Karen (outside of Nairobi), five nights in Tumutumumu (Nyeri County), six nights in Maralal (Samburu County), three nights in Gatunga (Tharaka Nithi County), , and a two-night safari at Maasai Mara.

**All accommodations provide mosquito nets over the beds where malaria is a concern. Eating raw vegetables and unpeeled fruit is not recommended. \*snacks, coffee, or specialty foods are not provided.**

- **Events and excursions:** On occasion, the planned events may need to be shifted from one day to the next, due to travel fatigue or other unanticipated learning opportunities.
- **Local partner relations:** The local partners are excellent and very welcoming. They all speak English and are very knowledgeable.
- **Health and safety matters:** Local police are informed of our visits. Bottled water is available at all sites and in the vehicles.
- **Communication:** English is widely spoken in Kenya and is the primary language used in schools. All of the 43 different tribes in Kenya have a unique dialect and most Kenyans speak their native tongue, Kiswahili, and English. On the rare occasion when students will be with people who do not understand English, a translator will be present.

## **B. ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK AND ACTIVITIES**

- a. This program supports service learning, field research, and the potential for internships.
- b. This course will be taught by Lesley Sager with the help of local community leaders
- c. This course is for three credits with a minimum of 25 contact hours. In preparation for the trip, students will attend meetings, do readings, and watch videos to prepare them. These presentations will serve range from understanding cultural humility to learning about design thinking and the human

centered design process to learning about Kenyan based programs that have helped empower women and girls. Examples of these are the Green Belt Movement and the ARP.

- d. **Students will have daily activities** that include interviewing and working with the women and girls, learning about local skills and techniques, and visiting successful factories, businesses, and schools
- e. **Daily journal entries are required**, along with **evening reflection meetings** where students discuss what they have observed the previous day.
- f. Faculty and community partners will show how this information builds on what they will experience next. **Midway through the program students will be required to write a reflection paper on their observations** of the resources and interesting income generating and farming techniques they learned from the various communities. This information will be valuable when working with the people in Samburu and Gatunga since all of the communities once had an arid climate similar to Tharaka Nithi and are now flourishing due to the planting of trees, as well as, implementing new farming and water collection techniques.
- g. As part of the experience, **student teams will be required to work with the girls at the Samburu Girls Foundation** on projects such as sewing water vests, campus design, empowerment issues, and beadwork. Other opportunity areas will range from sustaining health to sustainable agriculture methods to alternative sources of fuel to microenterprise and product development.
- h. **A final paper** will be required that addresses their experience and research on the area of their choosing. Which was determined before departure. The paper must include photos and any other important documentation and potential solutions to the relevant issues. **The final paper will be due a week after the trip.**

**C. Program itinerary: \* locations do not vary, however the activities per day may**

**Day 01 (May 22):**

Arrival to Nairobi and transfer Carmelite Monastery in Karen. The participants will be received by Dickson Wambugu and the driver guide(s) at the JKI- Airport and get transferred to Hotel.

**Day 02 (Wednesday, May 23):**

8:00 am: Breakfast  
9:30 am: Giraffe Center  
11:00 am: Elephant Orphanage  
12:30 pm: Lunch at Carmelite  
1:30 pm: Galleria Mall – Phones and ATM  
2:30 pm: Visit the Nairobi Arboretum Park  
6:00 pm: Dinner and reflection  
7:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.

**Day 03 (Thursday, May 24):**

8:00 am: Breakfast  
8:30 am: Depart of **Nyumbani Village**  
10:30 am: Tour the village  
12:30 pm: Lunch  
1:00 pm: Tour the village cont.  
4:00 pm: Depart for Nairobi  
6:00 pm: Dinner and reflection  
7:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.

**Day 04 (Friday, May 25):**

8:00 am: Breakfast  
9:00 am: meet with Dr. Tammary to discuss the harmful practices of FGM  
11:00 am: Tour the University of Nairobi  
1:00 pm: Lunch in town at Healthy Foods Creations  
1:30 pm: Shop at KarioKor Market (optional)  
3:00 pm: Nairobi National Museum (optional)  
6:00 pm: Dinner and reflection  
7:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project. Guests introduced to the host family.

**Day 05 (Saturday, May 26):**

8:00 am: Breakfast  
8:30 am: depart for Hell's Gate National park.  
9:00 am: Brief - stop-over at the Rift Valley Viewpoint.  
9:30 am: Arrive at the Park. Bike to the gorges for a guided hike  
12.30 pm: Picnic Lunch.  
3:00 pm: Depart  
6:00 pm: Dinner and reflection  
7:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.

**Day 06 (Sunday, May 27):**

8:00 am: Breakfast - Briefing - does and don'ts  
9:00 am: Leave for **Tumutumu Village-Nyeri**.  
12:00 pm: Greetings and lunch with the host family.  
2:00 pm: Walking tour of area - garden, visit Julius's Father  
4:00 pm: Community members share their historical experience working with the Green Belt Movement on various projects such as Food Security/Beekeeping/other sustainable income activities.  
6:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection

**Day 07 (Monday, May 28):**

8:00 am: Breakfast  
9:00 am: Walk to the Tana River and sight see  
12:00 pm: Lunch and discussion with the women on the daily challenges  
1:30 pm: Coffee picking and factory tour  
4:00 pm: Work on the water vest  
6:00 pm: Social interaction/journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and Reflection

**Day: 08 (Tuesday, May 29):**

8:00 am: Breakfast  
9:00 am: Climb the hill  
12:00 pm: Lunch  
1:30 pm: visit the primary school  
3:00 pm; Work on the water vest, learn cottage crafts  
5:00 pm: Cook with the women  
6:00 pm: Social interaction/journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection

**Day 09 (Wednesday, May 30):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9.00 am: Select from: work on water vest, make a bee house, work in the garden  
11:00 am: Join community members in cooking lunch  
1:00 pm: Lunch with the women  
3:00 pm: Tour Karatina Market.  
5.00 pm: Help prepare dinner  
6:00 pm: Social interaction/journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: dinner and a movie!

**Day 10 (Thursday, May 31):**

8:00 am: Breakfast  
9:00 am: Walk to town and visit the clinic  
10:30 am: Visit the girls boarding school and introduce the journal project.  
12:00 pm: Picnic lunch  
1:30 pm: Plant the trees with the girls and the school  
5:00 pm: Cook with the women  
6:00 pm: Social interaction/journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection  
8:00 pm: Fireside chat with Elders  
**(Gale and Mike Ford join us)**

**Day 10 (Friday, June 1):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9.00 am: Say goodbye ☹️  
1:00 pm: visit Thompson Falls and stop for lunch  
5:00 pm: Arrive in **Maralal, Samburu** and settle in at **Ngari Hill** 😊  
6:00 pm: social interaction/journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: dinner

**Mid-point reflection paper due on Saturday**

**Day 11 (Saturday, June 2): \*activities may vary while in Samburu**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9:00 am: Tour Maralal Town  
11:00 am: Samburu Girls Foundation Introductions  
1:00 pm: Picnic Lunch  
2:00 pm: Begin workshops (buildings, beadwork, water vest, journal)  
5:00 pm: Depart for Ngari Hill  
6:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection

**Day 12 (Sunday, June 3):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9:00 am: Depart for SGF  
9:30 am: workshops  
12:00 pm: Picnic Lunch  
1:00 pm: workshops  
4:00 pm: Sports/music  
5:00 pm: Depart for Ngari Hill  
6:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection

**Day 13 (Monday, June 4):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9:00 am: visit girls at their schools/homes  
12:00 pm: Picnic Lunch  
1:00 pm: Workshops (buildings, beadwork, water vest, journal)  
4:00 pm: Sports/music  
5:00 pm: Depart for Ngari Hill  
6:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection

**Day 14 (Tuesday, June 5):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9:00 am: visit girls at their schools/homes  
12:00 pm: Picnic Lunch  
1:00 pm: Workshops (buildings, beadwork, water vest, journal)  
4:00 pm: Sports/music  
5:00 pm: Depart for Ngari Hill  
6:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection

**Day 15 (Wednesday, June 6):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9:00 am: market day at Maralal  
12:00 pm: Picnic Lunch  
1:00 pm: Wrap up workshops  
3:00 pm: Sports/music  
4:00 pm: Say farewell ☹️  
5:00 pm: Depart for Ngari Hill  
6:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection

**Day 16 (Thursday, June 7):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9:00 am: depart for Marimanti  
1:00 pm: Lunch  
4:00 pm: Arrive at Home Lodge  
5:00 pm: Swim or rest  
6:00 pm: Social interaction with Aniceta Kiriga  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection

**Day 17 (Friday, June 8):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9:00 am: Meet with Aniceta at her home and talk about The Tharaka Women's Welfare Program  
12:00 pm: Lunch  
1:00 pm: Tour Gatunga  
3:00 pm: Meet with the Women during an adult literacy group meeting at Manduru Village.  
5:00 pm: Swim or rest  
6:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.  
7:00 pm: Dinner and reflection Travel day.

**Day 18 (Saturday, June 9):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9:00 am: visit Generations Orphanage  
12:00 pm: Lunch  
2:00 pm: Meet with the Kiumbe women at Evelina's home  
5:00 pm: Swim or rest  
6:00 pm: Dinner and reflection. Say goodbye to Aniceta ☹️  
7:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.

**Day 19 (Sunday, June 10):**

8:00 am: Breakfast.  
9:00 am: Depart for Nairobi  
1:00 pm: Lunch  
5:00 pm: rest at Carmelite  
6:00 pm: Dinner and reflection  
7:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.

**Day 20 (Monday, June 11):**

6:00 am: Depart for Maasai Mara  
1:00 pm: Lunch  
2:00 pm: Game Drive  
6:00 pm: Dinner and reflection  
7:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.

**Day 21 (Tuesday, June 12):**

6:00 am: Game Drive  
1:00 pm: Lunch  
2:00 pm: Game Drive  
6:00 pm: Dinner and reflection  
7:00 pm: Social interaction /journal/personal project.

**Day 22 (Wednesday, June 13):**

8:00 am: Breakfast  
9:00 am: Depart for Nairobi  
1:00 pm: Lunch  
4:00 pm: shopping/rest  
6:00 pm: Dinner and reflection  
7:00 pm: PACK  
8:00 pm: depart for airport (flight AA 6654 11:35 departure)

**Final paper due by June 21**