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Socio-Cultural and Economic Implications of EWB-MSU Development Projects In Khwisero, Kenya

This paper explores the borehole implemented by Engineers Without Borders at Montana State University at Emwaniro Public Primary School in Khwisero, Kenya. During my six weeks in Khwisero I was interested in determining any unforeseen implications this project may be having on its recipients. This paper draws on twelve interviews that focused on the social, economic, and cultural benefits and drawbacks of this project. Specifically, I wanted to know if the social lives of women who used to carry water have changed by altering their water source; and I wanted to explore the changes in traditions, culture, customs, and economy the borehole project is having on individual households. After analyzing my results I found that there was little change in the social lives of women. The borehole has, however, altered traditional customs causing a shift in gender roles and a significant minority of the population did report a negative economic impact. This paper responds to certain global factors that may be contributing to this issue. An additional finding was that school children now spend more time in school than they used to and are healthier. Potable water at the school has eliminated the need for children to carry water to school hence freeing up time to spend in the classroom. Also, children can now wash their hands after using the latrine contributing to a decrease in disease. Overall, the borehole seems to be having a positive impact on the lives of its recipients. However, the fact that many are having a problem with affording the fee for water should not be over looked. This paper suggests that this segment of the population may increase in the near future.