



"Working with rural Tanzanian communities on improvement of their standard of living and future opportunities, whilst preserving the natural environment through the creation of small scale, sustainable projects with the members of these communities."

Eselelei Community Development Program

Eselelei is a village in Northern Tanzania, located in the heart of Maasai land. Situated on sloping hills overlooking Lake Manyara National Park and the Great Rift Valley, the Maasai's livelihood still largely depends on cattle herding. With a per capita income of about \$1 a day, the primary focus of families is on providing for the basic needs (food and shelter). For many, providing education for their children is something they simply can't afford.

For its visitors, Eselelei has a number of attractions; the village has its own natural beauty with hills and wide ranging vegetation; around the settlement it is not uncommon to see eye to eye with a passing giraffe or zebra.

The cultural tourism programs, initiated by Bush2Beach Safaris, founders of ARF, offer a grass-roots experience of real life amongst the Maasai; Tarangire and Lake Manyara National Park are just a few miles from the village; an excellent opportunity to combine eco-tourism with community development, assisting the community in achieving their goals.

Close contacts with the Mwenyi Kiti (village chairman) and his community helped us set our priorities for this program; there is a great need for access to clean water, education and medication, each in its way responsible for the improvement of daily life in the village and the future opportunities of the community.

Community in charge

A clear example of our emphasis on community driven initiatives, as opposed to a top-down approach, is the problem of access to water in Eselelei. In this case, the Maasai themselves decided the best solution would be to pipe in water from the village of Mto wambu, 25 km's west and had already started collecting money amongst the community members. When ARF was presented with a plan and costing, we were able to contribute the missing funds out of village fees collected through the cultural tourism program and donations received from visitors.

The Maasai were in charge for the entire project; they purchased the materials, provided the labour and guided the project until its completion. Any day now, the pipeline will be connected to the main water supply and the village will have access to clean water, freeing women and children from the task of walking miles to fetch water, allowing them to go to school and take their education into their own hands.

We are convinced that by supporting community driven initiatives with knowledge and access to micro finance, the projects will be sustainable and aligned to the real needs of the communities involved.



Access to education



Meeting with village council

Contact ARF

To get to know more about our foundation, our projects and the cultural tourism programs run by the Maasai themselves, please contact:

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