

<b>Project</b>	<b>Sand Dam Community Works Project, Kenya</b>
<b>Location</b>	Tawa, SE Kenya
<b>Dates</b>	14 – 27 September 2019
<b>Group size</b>	12 people from Jersey

### Aim and Context of the Project

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This project will support a subsistence farming community in Ukambani (a region of SE Kenya comprising Machakos, Makueni and Kitui Counties) to build a sand dam to provide a reliable, year-round water source. Sand dams are a sustainable, low-cost, rainwater harvesting technique built into dry river channels to capture and store seasonal runoff so that water is available to local people to even during the dry periods. Over the last 16+ years, sand dams have proven highly effective at transforming lives in this part of Kenya.

The project area suffers frequent droughts and unreliable rainy seasons exacerbated by climate change, leading to environmental degradation, severe water shortages, and failed/reduced harvests. Since most households rely on small-scale farming, these conditions result in widespread hunger and high levels of poverty. Over two thirds of families live in poverty – 20% more than the national average – and about the same proportion also has no access to safe water. The constant search for water leaves people with little time to invest in improved agriculture, trapping them in a cycle of aid dependence. The sand dam is expected to address the key issue of water scarcity and provide families with the time and opportunity needed to focus on food production and income generation.

Excellent Development (ED) and our partner Africa Sand Dam Foundation (ASDF) welcome a team of volunteers from Jersey to work on this project. The volunteers will work with a community-based Self-Help Group (SHG) to build the sand dam, experiencing first-hand how it is done and what it means. It will be hard work, but there is a job to suit every ability.

Participation on this project will enable volunteers to learn about beneficiaries' daily lives, their challenges and hopes; how sand dams work and their role in our approach to development; and see the impact of JOA's previous support to other communities in this area.

### Project Information

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The project will support one SHG and its wider community to have a new local and reliable source of clean water. SHGs are self-formed groups of male and female farmers from the same village or community who have joined together for the purposes of community development, motivated by *Mwethya*, a Kenyan philosophy of working together to achieve a common goal. The average size of a SHG is approximately 35 farmers and experience shows 70% are female.

**Group Size:** Up to 12 people from Jersey (including a leader). Excellent Development will provide 2 additional leaders to support the volunteer team during their time in Kenya.

**Location:** The team will stay at the Jambo Village Hotel in Tawa. Tawa is a small town in northern Makueni County about 2hrs drive from Nairobi. Tawa is the closest town to our project sites in northern Makueni and southern Machakos counties. All of the communities with whom we work typically live in remote rural locations. Out of the communities we support in this area, we will select one located no more than 45 minute drive from Tawa for this project.