



Independent Global Study with Women In Rural Kenya

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• Kenya/ Meru

Kenya is a Country in East Africa. It has a population of 48.65 million. The official languages in Kenya is English and Swahili with 68 local languages. Kenya is very diverse and it is undoubtedly one of the finest and famous safari destinations in the world Kenya is divided into Counties, it has 47 counties. Meru is the 6th largest.

Meru, although different from the different ethnic groups share some commonalties when it comes to gender inequality .

Women in Kenya

- In 2014, 7.6% of women were living with HIV compared with 5.6% of men.²³
- Young women (aged 15-24) account for up to 21% of all new HIV infections with a prevalence of between 4 and 6 times higher than males of the same age.
- .Owing to cultural values large majority of women in the rural areas are deprived of a means to earn an income.
- Young Kenyan women also have a lower level of HIV knowledge than their male peer.

As a result of this chaotic external environment most of these women neglect themselves. Self care activities will help the women relax.



Independent Global Study

My Independent Global study was with women who were affected by HIV/AIDS.

- I Planned and organized self-care activities using meditation, breathing activities, Cognitive behavioral therapy(CBT) techniques
- Co facilitated a leadership training program for women and youths.
- Monitored and evaluated the quality of services offered to the women.

International Peace Initiative

International Peace Initiatives is a Kenyan based Non Profit Organization which promote cultures of peace by supporting sustainable initiatives that improve livelihoods and enhance quality of life.

Specifically, IPI builds a new generation of leaders through peace and ethical leadership programs, and provides orphans, women living with HIV/AIDS, survivors of violence, and communities with the tools and resources to move from violence, poverty, and crisis to stability and self-reliance, thereby building resilient communities.

Outcomes:

By the end of this 4 weeks global independent study:

- I got to learn about HIV/AIDS within Kenya's context and its effect on individuals, families and communities.
- The women were able to do different self care activities.
- Their attitude towards self care and leadership changed.

Skills Utilized/Developed

Respect for diversity: While in Kenya I was aware of my positionalities and respected the different culture.

Communication skills: I was able to actively listen to the women and engage with them through self care activities and French lessons

Critical thinking skills: Social work theories and my experience in Kenya informed my interaction and engagement with the women.

Classroom Connections

SW 528: Independent Study In a Global Setting

This course helped me reflect on my positionalities and how it might influence my stay in Kenya. I also learned how to enter a community as an outsider and to be open minded.

SW 658: Community Organizing with women

This course taught me different community organizing tools, theories and strategies with women through the feminist lens.

Lessons Learned

- . I learned that an insider can also be an outsider.
- Communities have the potential to develop themselves.
- Context is very important for my social work practice
- I am not working for communities I am working with communities



Career Connections

As a potential global social worker in Africa. I learned about issues women face in Kenya. This knowledge will inform my social work practise in similar or different communities

Advice

- Expect a surprise .
 - Do not over think it just go out and have a new experience and get a new perspective.
 - Familiarize with the place you are going to either by reading a book or talking to someone
- Last be open minded..

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