



Berichte und Impressionen

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ECONOSPHERE PROJECTS HOUSEHOLD PROFILES

FACES OF MPUAI,TALEK VILLAGE- MAASAI MARA

A jack of all trades, best describes her occupation. Barely in her 40s, Kisarua a mother of eight children is a widow and has to do menial jobs to earn her living. She collects firewood and sells them at fifty shillings a bundle; she gets hired to build manyattas (Maasai houses) at a fee ranging from 600-800 shillings per completed manyatta; she also cleans out cattle kraals/enclosures at a fee in the range of 400-600, depending on the size of the enclosure. During the tourist peak season from June to December she also makes bead ornaments which she sells to the tourists at the local cultural center.

A normal day for her begins at 5.30AM when she gets up to milk her cows- she has 5 of them-; then she prepares breakfast for her kids before setting off to deliver firewood to her customers. Firewood though low paying is her most consistent source of income because she has buyers for it on a daily basis. The other menial jobs are spaced out, with contracts coming up only four to six times a month. Only two of her children are in school- Patrick is in a secondary school in Narok while Seremon goes to school at nearby Mara Hills Academy, on a partial scholarship from the Maasai Girls' initiative. For a Maasai woman, who never went to school and is a widow, Kisarua has risen above all the barriers both social and economic to ensure her children get an education and lead a better life than hers. When she saw the solutions and products Econosphere Projects is offering to the community- solar lamps, bio digester and the toilet/bathroom- she approached us to enquire how she could get them with her meager earnings.

While Kisarua toils daily only resting in the night after collecting her firewood for sale the next day, milking her cows, bringing in the livestock into the kraal and cooking for her children- many other women in the community spend their afternoons lying under the tree shades with their children knowing their husbands will bring home the bread'. A luxury Kisarua cannot afford. Below is an excerpt of our interview with Kisarua at her home;

Q: What do you use for cooking- firewood, kerosene , charcoal or gas?

A: Firewood

Q: Do you have a toilet and bathroom?

A: No

Q: What do you use for lighting in your house?

A: I have a solar lamp which I use together with a kerosene lamp.

Q: How much do you spend on kerosene per week?

A: I buy a liter of kerosene at Talek market every Wednesday at a price of 100 shillings.

Q: What are the most common infections that affect your family?

A: Mostly we get Malaria, Brucellosis, Colds/ Flu and skin diseases in the children.

Q: Do treat them in hospital or at home?

A; Normally I use the traditional herbs but do go to hospital if there is no improvement. The hospital is about 4 Km away and we have to pay for the treatment, so I prefer to go there last.

Q: What is the size of your livestock?

A: I have 5 cows and 30 sheep and goats.

Q: Who takes care of them?

A: My sons Lenkai and Mserungu take care of them since they do not go to school. During the dry spell when we have to migrate far in search of pastures, my brother in law takes them in with his own herds.

Q: If you could afford it, what would you most like to acquire in your home from Econosphere Projects

- Biogas Digester
- A Solar Lamp- 2.5W Junior Matrix
- Toilet & Bathroom

A: I would like to have all of them but what I need most now is a Solar Lamp since I am able to chip in towards the cost if I get it at a subsidized price.

Q: Besides the 3 options given what 3 things do you wish to have to improve your life?

- A: • I would like for my sons to get some kind of technical training so they can get employment in the camps and conservancy because I do not have enough livestock to bequeath them.
- In need a tank so that I can collect clean water for cooking and drinking. My house has a tin roof which makes it possible for me to collect rain water instead of having to go to the borehole, 2KM away.
 - Lastly I would like to get capital to enable me start up a business or expand on what I engage in already so that I can support my family without depending on handouts now and again.

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