

April 14, 2009

Good morning to everyone,

Like everyone else in the world I have been affected physically, emotionally and spiritually by the global economic crisis. Fear of economic insecurity is one of my most dreaded emotions. I raised over \$20,000.00 for Participate Now! in 2008 but have only raised \$5,000.00 so far in 2009 which will cover the final phase of the Koani farmers project, but not any salaries (like mine or any future pilot projects). I have been feeling very insecure and lacking confidence to write an email asking for donations. I considered giving up completely and trying to find paying work so that I can buy food and pay my rent. I have choices – I can give up, or I can take a deep breath and ask for help, or I can sit quietly and gather my inner strength and then talk with people and strategize what to do next. I have come up with a plan – I am living by my “wants and needs” list – if it isn’t a need then I can’t spend money on it. That’s simple. I have written up a list of my daily and monthly expenses so that I know what my reality is. And I have decided **not** to give up on Participate Now!. The work that I’m doing is exactly what I am supposed to be doing – I inspire, influence and make a difference in peoples’ lives, and in my own. I truly believe that if I put all of my energy and focus into my work then I and others benefit. My job is to row the boat, not to steer it.

My dream is to have enough funding at some point so that I don't have to ask for money. Then I can just send emails telling you about my fascinating life and work here in Zanzibar. But, for now, part of my work is fund raising – I hate being dependent and needy but I am and I am asking you for a donation – anything at all will make a huge difference. I want to raise \$10,000.00 as soon as possible for the Kendwa Water Project. We had been hoping that a local hotel owner might fund the project but that is not possible at this time. The cool thing about having my own foundation is that I have the opportunity to raise money to do a project immediately – instant implementation!!! I am not going to give up because what other option is there? None of us can give up – find something that you believe in and never let it go!!!

“Being rich is having enough to share with others”

Suleiman Said Mohammed

Please send a check to either the CT address or if you live in Zanzibar you can contact me directly or send a check to the Zanzibar address – we have a bank account in Zanzibar and can accept USD or TSH. Or visit our website [Participate Now!](#) to make a donation through PayPal.

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As you know, my goal is to help to transform international development so that it is more successful and sustainable. Large donors want to reach as many people as they can effectively – this is very difficult and complex to do on a large scale. How do you find out the true needs of the most vulnerable – of the people who need advice and guidance the most? This is the question asked by many people I meet who work with large donor organizations. All I have is my own experience that I am learning from – I have lived in Zanzibar for over 4 years and plan on staying here. I am implementing small scale pilot projects to learn from the people what their needs are and how to get those needs met in the most efficient way possible. I am not a professional – I had been a small business consultant in Connecticut for many years and first learned about international development when I traveled from Cairo to Capetown in 1974. I attended Tufts

University as an older student and graduated in 2004 with a degree in Political Science. I learned so much there about all of the countries that I had previously visited – I learned to ask questions and to explore. And that is what I have been doing since I came to Zanzibar. I have been told that I will never change the development industry – that it's too large and has been established too long. Does that mean I shouldn't try? There are many people with good intentions doing all sorts of different work in developing countries and all of their voices need to be heard - we need communication to flow between every group. All I can do is learn from my own work and my own experiences – I share that with anyone and everyone hoping that others will be curious, will question and will learn how to better help the people who need it the most – wherever they may be in the world.

## Kendwa Water Project - April 2009

I have completely redone my website and I like it. I'm not a website designer by trade but I wanted to have my website be a comfortable place for visitors – like my home is. There is always a welcome mat out at my website and at my home in Zanzibar if you are ever visiting this beautiful exotic island off the East coast of Africa. I have added a “projects” page with all of our reports and budgets for our three small projects. The [Kendwa water proposal](#) is a short one and the [Kendwa water project budget](#) is simple and clear. I have included [Our Method](#) which is the way that we approach every project. The budget needed for the water project is \$6,800.00. I am hoping to raise more than that so that we can have a participatory planning workshop with the villagers to learn more about their needs, their hopes and their dreams.

## Quest for Water



This is all about water – having access to it. Kendwa village is situated near the ocean where there are a number of hotels. The water pipes to the hotels run RIGHT BY the village - the village itself only has access to three wells. There are approximately 800 adults and 300 children in Kendwa village area which consists of 4 very small villages. These women have to fetch the water from the wells which are at least 50 meters deep and then they have to carry the water to their homes – they do this twice a day. These villagers deserve self respect and dignity – to have their voices heard. Last week they apologized to Suleiman and me for being “mburimatari” which means people who know nothing, who have no education. They said that we came along and helped them to understand that they have to sit and talk, to plan and initiate. They thanked us for spending the time with them to help them negotiate which plan is best for them to be able to get water. They have a right to have a voice and to be able to figure out what their needs are and how to get them met. This project that we are doing is specifically focused on getting 13 water taps installed in the four villages. In our initial visit they told me that the children would be so happy if they could turn on a tap and get water – hopefully I will be sending you photos of children playing around a tap in a few weeks.

## Participation and Maps



Participate Now! is dedicated to participation – that is the basis of our work. We listen and learn, create and plan, collaborate and document and share. Suleiman, others and I have been meeting with the villagers since last October listening and learning about the water problems. We meet in the room adjacent to the mosque and next to the madrassa where the children are often beautifully reciting the Koran. The map on the left was drawn the first time that we met with the villagers to get a sense of what was the reality. The second map was drawn by the villagers showing (in red dots) where the existing wells are, where the main water pipe is and where they would like to have water taps. We walked the villages three times since then assessing the best places for the taps. We have been very transparent and made sure that everyone has been included in the planning process. We have met with fundis (workmen), the sheha (mayor) and various people from the local government and the Ministry of Water to acquire all of the approvals needed. This has taken time and money – we do not have an office or a vehicle. We have volunteered our time, we have taken shared vans and asked for a discount, we have used our own computers and printers and materials to put together this proposal.

## Children Who Will Benefit



And who benefits most from this project? The villagers and the children!!!! We have worked hand in hand with these villagers to help them come up with their own “business” or “strategic” plan as to how they can get water to their village in a sustainable and respectful way – working with the environment, the community and the local government officials. We are hoping to raise \$10,000.00 so that in the next few months we can have a participatory planning workshop for one week. We want to take our time and listen closely to what they are saying. We want the people to truly have their own voices – to help them be able to see exactly what their needs are and then help them come up with plans that will meet their needs. Neither I nor anyone else can decide what the priorities for the village should be. I always ask the question “How do you define success?”. I will not know how Kendwa village will define success until I ask them and then take the time to truly listen to what they have to say.

Kendwa village has been there for centuries – long before the hotels were there. They will still be there long after the hotels change hands or leave. We are hoping to possibly coordinate some future funding from the hotels that will help – once the village has their plan clearly laid out and knows what their priorities are. Help these people to have a voice – please donate so that we can bring water to them. The men are going to dig the trenches themselves and build the stands for each tap. We can have water available within 2 to 3 days once we have enough money. Please help us to accomplish this.

If you do not want to receive future emails like this – please just email me and I will remove you from the list. I completely understand that it is very difficult to read long emails.

Visit our website <http://www.participatenowfoundation.org> to learn more about our foundation. Our main objective is to do small-scale projects with lasting impact. We are grateful for any support at all that you can give us. Thank you for taking the time to read this email.

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Thank you for taking the time to read this email

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