

**Summer Internship Report 2017**

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Hometown: Chattanooga, Tennessee



**Anti-Female Genital Mutilation  
Network (AFNET)  
Dodoma, Tanzania**

*(Sharron is on the far left)*

**Provide an overview of the organization/research project and a summary of your responsibilities, tasks, and/or projects.**

AFNET, Anti-Female Genital Mutilation Network, is an NGO based in the capital of Tanzania. Their vision is "A society of good welfare that is embracing principles of good governance". AFNET works towards that vision by working with local communities and engaging them in a variety of projects and initiatives. Many of their projects are focused on anti-FGM and advocacy against gender based violence. While we were in Tanzania their main project was called CEGO, Citizens Engaging in Governmental Oversight. CEGO is funded through USAID and encourages and informs citizens about how to effectively engage with their local governmental officials. We attended a CEGO workshop while in Dodoma. During my time there I created a website for AFNET and trained a volunteer on how to update it. I also assisted my fellow intern in creating a few promotional videos. We collected materials for a future book about FGM and AFNET's work.

**During your internship, what did you accomplish or how did you make a difference? In what ways did you grow in your professional and technical skills?**

I think the most meaningful thing I accomplished for AFNET was creating their website. Creating an online presence was something the director really wanted for AFNET and something that I think will have a long term impact for the organization. Before this summer I did not have any experience with documentary work. I learned a lot from Brook, my fellow intern. Some specific skills I got some experience with are adding subtitles and recording sound for a video.

**Describe a problem that you helped to solve at your internship. What skills or knowledge from your education at Sewanee helped you address the problem?**

The first day of our internship we didn't have access to internet. Brook and I managed to make ourselves useful by going through photo albums and selecting some that we thought would work well for the website. I also used some of the time to plan what sort of content we would want to put on the website.

**In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?**

Brook and I worked together every day during our time in Dodoma. We have different strengths and styles of work, but we managed to work well together and I think our finished products (the website and the videos) were better because of our collaboration.

**How did your internship affect your career plans?**

I have always known I want to work abroad. This internship confirmed that for me and gave me invaluable experience at an NGO abroad.

**In what ways did your internship cause you to encounter people of different backgrounds from your own? What steps did you take to communicate effectively with such persons? What did you learn from such persons' perspectives?**

Before this summer, the only time I'd spend in Africa was a weekend trip to Morocco during my semester abroad in Spain. It was a really incredible experience to live with a Tanzanian family and to see what their everyday life is like. The Mwaga family were truly wonderful and kind people. I hope that the bonds I made with them will last for many years to come. The Mwaga's and the people I worked with all spoke English very well so the language barrier was not too much of a challenge. However we did have a little trouble with some of the people we met in the community.

**Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:**

Thank you so much for opening your home to me, Mama Sarah! I hope I can come back to Tanzania sometime soon. Asante sana!!