

Engineers Without Borders' New Hampshire Chapters Complete an Assessment Trip to Three New Villages in Uganda

BY: GINA PANIK, PE ON FEBRUARY 26, 2025



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In January 2025, seven representatives of the Engineers Without Borders New Hampshire Professional chapter and the University of New Hampshire Student chapter (EWB-NH and EWB-UNH) visited the remote villages of Butooli, Dema, and Nabweyo-A in Uganda.

Getting to these villages entails over 24 hours of flying, followed by more than six hours of driving. Temperatures in the dry season are hot – as high as 90 degrees Fahrenheit – and conditions are typically dusty. The villages are filled with fruit trees and surrounded often by fields of cassava. Upon our arrival in the village of Butooli, the villagers gathered at the village center and performed joyful songs and dances. The village elder welcomed us profusely and spoke to us about their needs.



Currently, the villagers retrieve drinking water from local swamps shared with farm animals and local wildlife, often located miles from their homes. Given the poor conditions of these water sources, they are constantly exposed to water and insect borne diseases that are endemic to this part of Africa. Outbreaks of waterborne disease are common and can cause deaths within the villages.



During our assessment trip in January 2025, the travel team collected data to assess the needs of the three villages. This included conducting community health assessments, meeting with the villages Water User Committees (WUCs), and conducting water quality testing of their water sources.

Using the data we've collected we will assess the village's overall needs and available infrastructure and analyze potential remedial alternatives so the best solution can be proposed. Potential solutions may require the installation of bedrock supply wells, spring boxes, or designing and implementing rainwater collection systems. The alternatives will be assessed as part of an Alternatives Analysis Report to be completed by EWB-NH and EWB-UNH later this year, with implementation tentatively planned for 2026.



EWB-NH was founded in June 2015 by local New Hampshire engineers. The organization has successfully installed bedrock supply wells in eight villages as part of a water supply project in the Buyende district. In 2026, we hope to install three more. However, EWB-NH would not be successful if it weren't for the support of our very own community. Each well we have installed costs approximately \$12,000. Thanks to the generous donations we have received over the years, more than 12,000 people now have access to clean drinking water.

If you are interested in learning more about EWB-NH, would like to donate, or would like to get involved, please visit our website at www.ewbnh.org. You don't need to be an engineer, and the professional chapter and UNH student chapter are always looking to add more volunteers and supporters.