

**VISION 2005:
An Integrated Conservation and Development Project
For the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest**



**A Project by the Kijabe Environment Volunteers
(KENVO) KENYA
With Financial Support from Conservation Leadership Programme**



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1. Executive Summary

The project Vision 2005: *Integrated Conservation and Development Project for the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest*, resulted from previous works of KENVO mainly supported by the BP Conservation Programme since year 2000. The project attempted to fill the gaps that had been identified in the previous projects and upscale some of the KENVO activities to other parts of the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest.

During previous studies, KENVO had found that if the livelihoods of the people are not directly linked to conservation, it difficult to achieve conservation objectives to the Kikuyu Escarpment forest. Poverty had been identified as a driving factor in forest destruction, hence the need to put in place a mechanism to support environmentally friendly income generating enterprises. There was also need to support the volunteers to be self-reliant by putting in place the micro credit scheme. Low level of awareness in conservation issues was also to be addressed within this project. The awareness creation mainly aimed at sharing lessons learnt from Kereita (pilot area) with the other forest blocks within the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest. This had aimed at promoting forest conservation, establishment of partnerships and formation of Community Forests Associations to enable the communities to participate effectively in the management of the forest.

In addition to awareness creation in the peri-forest community members, the project also supported Environmental Education Programme for the local schools. The school based programme has become a strong tool of molding the pupils and students to be responsible members of the community as well as agents of change, as they are quick in implementing what they have learnt. They are also able to express their opinions concerning the environment.

The project was also keen in building the capacity of the community conservation groups as well as that of the Foresters in engaging on Participatory Forest Management and the implementation of the Kenya Forest Act 2005 that supports community involvement in the management of the Kenyan forests. The Act empowers the community to participate in forest management in partnership with the Kenya Forest Service through the Formation of the Community Forest Associations and development of management plans.

2. Acknowledgement

The KENVO team and the entire community of Kikuyu Escarpment Forest extend their heartfelt gratitude to the BP Conservation Programme now Conservation Leadership programme for the financial support to implement this project. We are indebted to your support since the year 2000 that has seen a transformation in conservation of the Kikuyu Escarpment forests.

The Whitley funds for Nature and the Swede-Bio came in handy to co-support the project activities especially in advocacy, capacity building and improvement of livelihood thus making the initiatives to have higher impact. Our thanks also go to UNEP that has recently attracted corporate bodies like Carbacid (CO₂) Company Ltd, Phillips Pharmaceutical Company, the Johnson and Johnson Inc. The King Baudouin Foundation and a host of other individuals to support this worthy course. Thanks to earlier works supported the European Union through the Community Development Trust Fund (CDTF) under the Biodiversity Conservation Programme (BCP) supported the up scaling of the Bee Keeping initiative in Kikuyu Escarpment and Kinangop Grassland. The Audemars Piguet Foundation is also supporting the Ecotourism venture in Kikuyu Escarpment.

We also thank the Kenya Forest Service (formerly Forest Department) for always being available to offer the technical advice and direction in conservation issues as well as allowing and recognizing KENVO in advocacy and capacity building of the conservation groups within the Kikuyu Escarpment Forests. We also thank the Foresters and the District Forest Officer from Nyandarua District who provided us with the information during institutional survey in Eastern Aberdare Forest, their contribution is highly appreciated.

We also thank all our partners, Nature Kenya, and KFWG for always being available. Without their support we would have felt neglected. Special thanks go to Maaïke Manten formerly of Birdlife International Africa Secretariat for supporting the initial development of the proposal. KENVO will always treasure her support.

Members of the peri-forest communities were instrumental in participating in the implementation of the project. To the school teachers who worked tirelessly to make the school activities a success and planning the World Environment Days, we say big thankyou. And to all the KENVO members, this project would not have been in your absence; ***keep the fire burning.***

3 Background Information

3.1 Project Description

3.2 Project Area

The project was a result of a series of activities through other projects by KENVO at the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest Reserves. The Kikuyu Escarpment Reserves are located at 0°56'S and 36°40'E, Central Kenya, Kiambu District about 38KM north-west of the capital, Nairobi. It forms the Southern part of the larger Aberdare forest and covers over 37,600 hectares at an altitude of 1,800.-2,700m. The forest is designated as an Important Bird Area and is listed by Nature Kenya in the highest priority category ("Critical") for conservation action (Bennum & Njoroge, 1999). The forest hosts a variety of important global species and is particularly rich in bird life. It is home for the Abbott's starling (*cinnyrinclus femolaris*) globally threatened bird specie and other regionally threatened bird species such as the vulnerable African Green Ibis, Ayre's Hawk Eagle, Crowned hawk Eagle and Red Chested Owlet (Taylor & Taylor, 1988).

A number of wild animals are also found in this forest that include the African Elephant (*Laxodonta africana*), Black and White Columbus Monkey (*Colobus polykomos*), Syke's monkeys (*Cercopithecus mitis*), forest hogs and small antelopes. The forest is known to have huge numbers of elephants between June and August when they move downward from the larger Aberdare forest to this area to give birth.

The forest is also an important community asset as it is the main source of both timber and non-timber products such as water, herbal medicine, fodder for livestock animals, grazing and building materials. The forest is also a tourist destination and lately it has been receiving different kinds of tourists as well as scholars.

3.3 Forest Management

At the district level, management of the forest is headed by the District Forest Officer with at least two assistants. However it is divided into seven blocks for ease of management and each block is supervised by a forester and a few forest guards. Currently the local communities through the Forest Community Association collaborate with the forester in the management of each block. The blocks include Thogoto, Uplands, Kereita, Kinale, Kamae, Raggia and Kieni (under the auspices of another District Officer in Thika District).

3.4. Conservation Issues

Although the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest is an important conservation site, it had continued to face conservation problems as a result of unsustainable human actions driven by the high level of ignorance and poverty. Majority of the peri forest community are economically unstable, and this has a direct impact on the forest due to the fact that some of the residents diversify their source of income by the unsustainable use of the forest through activities like timber logging, charcoaling, commercial harvesting of fuel wood and encroachment (that was particularly rampant in the early 2000s during the non residential cultivation in the forest). Therefore there was need to come up with a conservation strategy that will not only address biodiversity conservation but that will also put into

consideration the livelihood of the adjacent community, to try and strike a balance between the conservation and livelihood issues. The forest was also faced with poor management practices especially due to lack of enough government staff hence the need to mobilize communities to participate in the protection and management of the forest. With the passing of the new forest Act by the Kenyan Parliament in 2005 that recognized the importance of the local communities in the management of the forest, there was need to train and build the capacity of the local communities to take the opportunity given by the government. This project therefore concentrated more in advocacy, community mobilization and capacity building, creating networks and partnerships, development of database for community conservation initiatives in Kikuyu Escarpment Forest Reserves and livelihood improvement through the micro credits scheme. Various activities and methods were carried out to achieve the objectives of the project.

4. Project objectives

This project aimed at scaling up and strengthening the best practices initiated by the past projects at Kereita forest block of Kikuyu Escarpment Forest. KENVO has been implementing various projects in Kereita forest block on piloting basis and had amassed useful experience and learnt lesson that through this project would be shared with the rest of the forest blocks in Kikuyu Escarpment Forest and beyond, eventually promoting conservation of Kikuyu Escarpment Forest in perpetuity. The ultimate goal of this project was to ensure that biodiversity resources at the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest are used and managed appropriately to improve the livelihood of the people while also delivering important environmental services in protection of globally important biodiversity in the long term. Specifically the project was addressing the following objectives:

1. Empowering the community to take part in biodiversity conservation and improvement of livelihood through provision of information and establishment of sustainable local partnerships and revenue base for continued conservation activities.
2. Strengthening the information base of the biological resources in the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest by assisting the well established community groups at each of the forest station to start simple information bases that will feed into the data base for the entire Kikuyu Escarpment Forest.
3. Promote and strengthen project publicity, community awareness and environment programme for the local schools.

4.1 Methodologies and Activities

This project was community oriented with most of the project activities organized and coordinated by the members of the community. This depended on the type of activity, for instance for the exchange visits the groups participating were responsible of organizing for the transport and identifying their training needs while the school teachers and Kenya Football Federation officials organized the World Environment and Sport Day respectively. This ensured broad involvement of members of the local community while at same time building the capacity of those involved in the implementation of the projects. This broad involvement also enabled drawing of synergy among the stakeholders involved while at the same time enabling KENVO personnel to concentrate on other issues. Due to this involvement KENVO has been able to display transparency and even set an example to other community groups.

4.2 Community empowerment and local partnership development for conservation initiatives.

Under this component the project attempted to create an opportunity for the local community to create partnership, share ideas and information, develop some livelihood improvement activities that are environmentally friendly and access to information. To achieve this, the following activities were carried out:-

4.2.1. Institutional Survey:

This involved recording information about community groups operating in Kikuyu Escarpment Forest and their activities. The activity aimed at establishing a data base that will enable the community to establish partnership with informed decision as they are able to know what each group is doing. The partnerships are to enable sharing of best practices among the community groups. The institutional survey covered the Western Aberdare region that mainly lies in the Nyandurua District of Kenya neighbouring the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest to the north.

After the institutional survey several exchange visits were supported where the conservation groups got an opportunity to share their best practices.

As a result of exchange visits, some groups learnt how to mobilize community into environmental conservation, build partnerships, how to enhance relationship and work closely with the government as well as how to develop a management plan. Through this activity and several other interactions, a community forest association in Kieni forest (part of Kikuyu forest in the north) was able to lead the unification of several Community Forest Associations (CFAs) to form one umbrella forest association that is now leading the development of management plan for Kieni forest. The Kieni forest Community Association has actually become a model association in Kikuyu escarpment forest.

Conservation groups from Kereita and Kinale forest were able to visit the Ndaragwa forest community where they learnt on practical Participatory Forest Management (PFM). From this visit, the Kereita CFA adopted the use of PFM cards to access forest products. This has enabled Kenya Forest Service to control illegal practices in the forest as the forest users have to be cleared by the forest association before they get the necessary permit from the KFS.

Frequent meeting of community leaders from Kikuyu Escarpment Forest has strengthened partnership among the conservation associations with the area. It has also strengthened the relationship between the community and the Kenya Forest Service formerly Forest Department. New partnership with other civil society organizations like Forest Action Network, Kenya Forest Working Group, the National Community Forest Association (NACOFA) and Nature Kenya has been established.



Fig 1. KENVO team holding discussion with farmers during the institutional Survey.

4.2.2. Revolving funds and micro credit scheme.

Linking community livelihood and development with environmental conservation was the goal of the project. Poverty had been identified in the past projects as a major contribution to forest degradation. To address this issue it was necessary to come up with an initiative that would address the root cause of the problem. The establishment of a micro credit scheme and a revolving fund in the long run aimed at supporting the KENVO volunteers and some of the community conservation groups to financially start income generating activities that will lead to improved livelihood.

Before the starting of the scheme, a four day training on microfinance and entrepreneurship was conducted where all the KENVO volunteers and representative of the community groups participated. The training covered strategic planning process and the process of business planning. The participants were in details trained how to prepare a market plan, an operational plan, financial plan and finally a management plan.

The beneficiaries are to repay the credit within a span of 2 years with a small interest. As the loan is repaid more volunteers and groups will benefit. The long term goal of this scheme is to establish a fund that will be accessible to local communities while of the same time contribute to conservation of the forest, not only the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest but other forest in Kenya. As a result of this fund, 27 volunteers have already benefited with 19 having gotten the fund in the first round and they have now cleared their first year of repayment. The other 8 got their loan in the second round and they have started repaying the loans. More are expected the course of the year. The volunteers have been able to set up small enterprises from where they are earning their daily life. From the fund six community groups have benefited. The groups have been able to invest the funds in environmentally friendly income generating projects ranging from beekeeping, dairy goat farming to sale of compost and farm yard manure to promote organic farming. This on the other hand has led to improvement of livelihood among the members as they are able to earn income from the profits made by the enterprise. It has also created employment as some of the beneficiaries have employed assistants in their businesses.

The micro credit scheme is actually contributing to the national economy as the beneficiaries have a higher purchasing power and they also pay taxes to the government through the business permits and other forms of taxes. **(See appendix 1. What are the beneficiaries of Green Fund saying)**

4.3. Strengthening the information of the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest

4.3.1 Biological assessment and forest monitoring.

The activity aimed at strengthening the information database for biological resources in Kikuyu Escarpment Forest. It also aimed at teaching other conservation groups how to develop database in their sites. The assessment involved history of birds found in Kikuyu Escarpment Forest, tree species, herbs and animals. This was done during the annual biological assessment carried out by KENVO in Kereita forest and during monthly bird walks that are carried out in the forest. More information is still being gathered. It also went an extra mile further to record the species of the tree seedlings being raised by the farmers' in the area. Forest patrols and policing was carried out on monthly basis (at the beginning and reduced to once in two months later) to ensure that illegal activities are not taking place in the forest. This was highly supported by most community members. Forest patrol and policing has become a famous activity within the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest. This has resulted to reduction in forest destruction and a positive change of attitude by the community towards the forest and an improved working relationship with the forest officers and guards. Training of new members on tree and bird identification was also carried out to enhance data collection and build the capacity of the community leaders to collect information on their own and then submit to KENVO. Monthly bird watch within the Kikuyu Escarpment has continued to take place and it has attracted a higher number of volunteers including school children to participate, thus raising their interests in bird watching. Members of several Wildlife and Environmental clubs in both primary and secondary schools have been trained on bird watching, tree identification and tree nursery management further building their capacity to participate in environmental conservation. The clubs are also allowed to borrow guide books and binoculars from KENVO when they are conducting these activities, in addition to getting a KENVO guide when they are visiting the forest or national parks, the guides offer training to the students when they are in the field.

4.4. Project publicity, community awareness and environment programme

The objective of this component was to increase the level of environmental awareness among local communities. Various the methods and tools were employed to achieve this objective. Under this component the following activities were carried out:

4.4.1 Teachers Workshop.

A workshop for more than 40 teachers who are patrons and matrons of Wildlife and Environmental clubs in their schools was organized. The workshop touched on the following topics; .

- Environment, Environmental Education and Sustainable Development in the school curriculum.
- Contribution of the Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA)¹ to Environmental Education.
- Environmental Pollution- “ the plastic menace”
- Role of forest Policy in Environmental Education

- Forming and sustaining a successful Wildlife/Environmental Club
- Experience sharing by teachers trained at the Elsamere Field Study Centre
- The role of the Kenya Wildlife Service in Environmental Education
- Kikuyu Escarpment Forest Reserve as a Community Asset and a Nature School.
- The Challenges of integrating environmental education in the school curriculum.

At the end of the workshop, the teachers agreed to work as five eco-zones. Each of the five zones also selected two representatives to the school programme coordination committee (made up of KENVO and the teachers), that is responsible of planning for the school activities and coordination of the same. The number of schools participating in the programme has increased from 8 schools at the beginning of this project to more than 30 schools currently. The coordination committee has also become more knowledgeable and experienced and as a result they have formed the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest Important Bird Area Schools Networks (KEFIBA) that is now almost autonomous from KENVO. KEFIBA is responsible of organizing all school activities such as school rallies, exchange visits among schools and the World Environment Day, with financial and material support from KENVO. The World Environment Day has now become an annual event since 2006 which schools are always looking forward to.

The Coordination committee was also supported to visit Tree is Life, a Church Based Organization in Nyahururu (part of the Rift Valley region), that is involved in Environmental Education in Laikipia and Nyandarua Districts. The aim of the visit was to learn on methods that are being used by the organization to reach the schools and how they are working with the teachers as well as share ideas and experiences with teachers from these areas. The teachers were to learn and replicate the best practices from the visit in their respective schools. As a result of this visit, the teachers learnt on the importance of initiating income generating activities that can earn income for their clubs and thus make the clubs sustainable. From this visit, KENVO has replicated the use of murals (paintings on walls) as a way of creating awareness. One school has started a bee keeping project as an income generating activity, while others have replicated activities such as tree seed harvesting which they then raise in the nurseries instead of purchasing the seeds, thus saving on cost of running the clubs.

4.4.2 Environmental Education in Schools.

The school based environmental education programme as mentioned earlier has expanded from the 8 schools that existed at the starting of the project to more than 30 schools. It is also highly supported by the ministry of education through the Division Education office, which is always involved in the planning of the school activities. The school activities have also expanded from the tradition of planting trees and bird watching to school rallies where students and pupils discuss various environmental issues such as climate change and global warming, and what they can do to reduce the effect of these two problems that are facing the planet and more particularly the developing world. World Environment Day has also become an annual event in the school calendar where schools compete in several activities that include marathon, music, artwork, poetry and beauty contest among other forms of entertainment. Winning schools in both primary and secondary school category are awarded with trophies and certificates. The best school in environmental activities is also awarded with a trophy to recognize the efforts made by the school. This trophy has been won by Matathia Primary School for the last three years and the school has become one of the most visited schools by others to learn on the initiatives that have taken place in the school. Due to the efforts of the schools considering that it is located in the driest part of the division, it was supported with a water tank by the European Union through the Biodiversity Conservation Programme to boost their water supply for their tree nursery. This reduced the burden the pupils

had of fetching water from a river more than 3km from the school, and they can now spend the extra time in their class work.

With additional support from Audemars Piguet Foundation the school programme has been supported to establish model schools in each of the eco-zones. The model schools have now become training tools where other neighbouring schools can visit to learn on environmental issues. Several other schools have also been painted with murals that have environmental messages and also display the work of the school community. The murals have become effective tools of creating awareness, more so because each person has a unique way of understanding and interpreting the drawing. A school newsletter is also being produced termly basis (thrice per year). The newsletter publicizes school activities that have taken place within the term and articles and views from pupils and students. This has continued to ensure wide participation by the schools.



Photo 2: Some students planting tress in their schools

4.4.3 Nature fair and sport Days.

Nature fairs and sports have become important and effective tools of creating awareness as they attract a large number of participants. These were organized during the World Environment Day, which has become an annual event. Nature fairs involves exhibition by community groups, KENVO and partners of their conservation initiatives and sharing of information in addition to environmental speeches delivered by invited guests. The day starts with a marathon that brings together pupils, students and members of the community especially the youth. The marathoners wear t-shirts bearing the theme of the day as a way of creating awareness about the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest and environment in general. An environmental Challenge Cup for the local football clubs has been set up to create awareness among the youths who are out of school. This is more so because the youths are mainly left out of the mainstream awareness creation activities such as workshops and barazas which are mainly attended by the parents and elderly members of the community. As a result of this initiative to involve youth in conservation initiatives, KENVO received fund from the World Bank and Government of Japan through the Kenya Community Development Foundation (Kenyan partner) for a one year youth empowerment project. The youth empowerment project involves KENVO training youths in leadership, group management and governance, exchange

visits, nature fair and sports. This aims at nurturing more youth groups in Lari Division who can be like KENVO in their areas of operation and who can contribute to environmental conservation and community development.



Photo 4: Two teams ready to compete for an Environmental Challenge Football Cup

4.4.4 Community training in Environmental laws

The environmental laws in Kenya are many and diverse and implemented by different government Ministries. The two main laws that affect the communities more are the Environmental Management and Coordination Act (1999) which rules above all others and the Kenya Forest Act 2005 which governs the management of Kenyan Forests and for the first time recognizes the role of the local communities in the management of the forest. There was need to prepare the local communities on their participation in forest management and how the laws affect them. KENVO organized a series of community training workshops in all the forest blocks of the Kikuyu Escarpment forest to raise awareness on these environmental laws and especially the Forest Act which was enacted in February 2007. The training involved simplifying the laws and interpreting into the local language for easy understanding by the local communities. It also involved mobilizing the communities to form the Community Forest Associations as mandated by the Forest Act as it is through these Community Forest Associations that the communities will participate in the forest management through the Participatory Forest Management approach that has been adopted by the Government of Kenya. As a result of these trainings and community mobilization activities, all the seven blocks of the Kikuyu Escarpment Forest Reserve now has active Community Forest Associations that are registered with the Government, recognized and mandated by the Forest Act to partner with the Kenya Forest Service (formerly the Forest Department) through a Forest Management Plan to manage the their respective forests. Currently the Associations are in the process of developing the management plans and KENVO has continued to support the associations with the necessary requirements and information that can lead to successful development of the management plans although this requires high investment of finances which most associations are lacking and KENVO do not have the capacity to support them. However KENVO has been assisting the associations to come up with income generating activities that can generate income to the associations and enable them to meet their financial obligations. Such activities include tree farming where the members

raise tree seedlings for commercial purposes, beekeeping and eco-tourism. We have also been able to assist the associations to create partnerships by linking them with other national and international organizations that can support the growth of these associations. It is worth mentioning that one of the Associations that is based at Kiriita Forest (KENVO Project piloting forest), which has been supported by KENVO since 2002 when the piloting of the Participatory forest management was being done, has been able to get funds to start a beekeeping project in the forest. The beekeeping project is ongoing. This shows that the local communities need to be empowered and nurtured, before they are able to operate on their own. This calls for support financially and in terms of information, exposure and experiential trainings and creation of partnerships and networking.



Fig 5: A Community workshop on Environmental Laws

4.4.5. Training of staff from the Kenya Forest Services

With the coming into force of the Forest Act 2005 and the change in management approach from an exclusive government oriented management system that never recognized local communities to an inclusive management system that calls for partnership between the government and the local communities, there was need to orient the forest officers who includes foresters and forest guards on the participatory forest management approach and the application of the new Forest Act. The first training that was co sponsored by the Biodiversity Conservation Programme (by the European Union) involved all the foresters from the Kikuyu Escarpment forest who were trained by senior forest officer and forest policy developers from the national office who. The foresters were taken through the Forest Act, the various forms of Participatory Forest Management as being practiced in various parts of the world and how the communities are going to be engaged and involved in the forest management.

The second level of training involved the forest guards. A total of 75 forest guards who attended the two days workshop were taken through the Forest Act, Participatory Forest Management, conflict resolution, working with the community and how to register and prosecute cases in the court of law. The aim of training the forest guards was to ensure that as the officers who are in touch with the community members they are aware of what the role of the community is and how to effectively register a crime and present in the court of law. This was prompted by frequent conflict between the officers and members of the community due to unclear definition of how they should relate. There have also been cases where the guards have not been able to register cases properly leading to the case being thrown out of the court, while other times they do not indicate the section of the law an offender has contravened when presenting the case in the court of law. This kind of training was the first of its kind in the country and other districts in the country are now replicating it. As a result there is great improvement in the working relationship between the forest guards and members of the community while several cases have successfully been prosecuted in the courts.



Fig 6: A training session for Forest Guards

4.4.6. Publicity of the project and sharing of lessons learnt

The project started with a launching ceremony in August 2005 which was held at the Gatamaiyu Fishing Camp and attended by among others members of the local community, Kiambu District Forest officer, students and pupils from local schools, nature Kenya and the Kenya Forest working Group. The project coordinator explained to the audience what the project is all about explaining in details the goal, objectives, activities and the implementation schedule of the project. Further the

day was spiced up with environmental music from the KENVO dancing troupe and from the school children who also recited poems.

The project also supported the publication of a lesson learnt sharing book that details what KENVO has been doing in the last ten years, lessons learnt and future plans. The aim of the book is to share our lessons with other community groups around the country who might benefit by replicating our best practice as well as use some of the lessons learnt in their growth. The book has shown a wide acceptance, and we have been receiving groups that are coming to learn from us. We have also been receiving invitations to share our experiences in various forums organized by our partners including the government departments.

5. Project Achievements

- Through the community empowerment through capacity building and advocacy, all the seven forest blocks now have registered active Community Forest Associations that are engaged in various conservation initiatives that are geared to conservation of the forest and sustainable utilization of natural resources.
- A partnership has been created between the community and the Kenya Forest Service (formerly Forest Department) thus reducing the conflicts that existed before and resulting to a concerted effort to protect the forest.
- Through the support of the project, the livelihood of the volunteers has improved as they are earning income from the investment they did with the loans granted by the project.
- We have been able to attract or receive funding from different donors to implement some of the recommendation and findings by the various projects supported by BP conservation Programme (now Conservation Leadership Awards). These includes the Ecosystem Grant Programme by IUCN Netherlands and Audemars Piguet Foundation to support ecotourism development in Kikuyu Escarpment Forest Reserve, Ecoagriculture Partners (USA) supporting eco agriculture initiatives (agriculture and biodiversity conservation) Busch and Gardens Sea World (USA)to support biodiversity monitoring and the Kenya Community Development Foundation is supporting a Youth empowerment in Environmental conservation and leadership programme. All these have resulted from the successful implementation of projects funded by Bp.
- A school programme headed by school teachers has taken shape and is now leading the school programme, which is also able to publish a school newsletter three times per year.
- Through the initial support by this project, World Environmental Day and nature fair have become annual events in Lari Division spearheaded by KENVO and attended by thousands of community members.
- Creation of networks and partnership between community groups and KENVO.

6. Lessons Learnt

It is important to note that the Kikuyu escarpment forest remains an important asset to the local community. It is therefore very important to consider community in decision making relating to the conservation and management of the forest. The current effort by government to involved

community in forest conservation is worthy commending. However more need to be done. During implementation the following key lessons were learned

- The local community is willing to support conservation initiatives when consulted, made aware and involved in seeking for the solutions of the observed problems. Infact the community have 'ready made solution to some problems'.
- Project will a contribution to community welfare will receive more support from the community
- Sometimes small resources and support makes a huge difference. The green fund is a living example. A sense of belonging is developed when such initiatives are promoted
- The youths and women have for a long time been left out the awareness creation strategy as the methods employed were not friendly to them e.g. workshops. Separate forums or events are sometimes to address some issues
- Activities that are open to the public with less limitation in participation have a bigger impact that the closed door strategies where a few selected representatives attend on behalf of the rest and they do not necessarily feedback on what is learnt to the larger community.
- Connecting the project and the activities to the reality and situation on the ground, yield many desired results
- Community will always support that have direct inputs to the livelihoods and at times lifestyles.
- Could have a diversity of activities addressing a common theme or goal (many voices but one message)
- In awareness activities always use tools and avenues that would suit a diversity of people and always be sensitive to different backgrounds (music and sports are good for young) stories and meeting fits old generation.
- Sporting activities are a good way of creating awareness as the information reaches a wide range of people. (NB even the old have talents,)
- There are untapped talents among the local youths who are looking for people of goodwill to assist them realize their dreams.

For the teams

- Remaining focused, delegation of duties (and not losing teamwork spirit) will be make work easy and attainment of the objectives as desired.

7.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Comments by the Beneficiaries of Green Fund.

“The support from Green Fund was of great help to me as I was in a position to acquire 2 sheep that have now increased in number. Through this am able to sell some and pay tuition fees for my Diploma Course in Wildlife Management by correspondence. This will build my career and continue earning me income, thanks to the Green fund” *James Manyara (1st phase beneficiary)*.

“Through support from Green Fund I was able to have enough capital to start a Posho Mill (grain mill) from where I am earning income, am able to pay my monthly bills without any struggle. I have also created employment for three young people from my community who operate the business when am engaged in KENVO activities. Further I have been able to invest in other businesses both locally and internationally. Through the business, I have interacted with different people and this has improved my public relationships as well as increased my skills in business management. Green Fund made me realize my dreams, long live Green Fund!” *Simon Chege Muiru (1st phase beneficiary)*

“Thanks to Green Fund I now have assets of my own that include a printing services business, 3 sheep and a plot which I intend to develop by putting up some residential houses for renting. Given equal opportunities to both men and women just like Green Fund did proves that as women we can do even better” *Zipporah Mugure (2nd Phase beneficiary)*

“I invested my loan from Green Fund in a dairy farming project, which later due to a drought that affected my area I changed to small scale farming which am doing with my wife. Am able to pay school fees for my children some of whom are in High School”. *David Ng’ethe (1st phase beneficiary)*.

“Green Fund was a great initiative to my life and it has really helped me to overcome some personal and family financial difficulties. I invested in livestock farming where am keeping sheep and bulls targeting the meat market. Recently I have started rabbit rearing and it is picking up well”. *Samuel Wakang’u (1st Phase beneficiary)*

“I did not invest my loan directly into business but it helped me in connecting electricity in my home which has really improved my living standard as I now do not use huge amount of money in lighting the house and other uses. Before having the electricity in the house, I was spending at least Kshs. 600 per month on Kerosene and charging of battery to operate electrical gadgets like television and radio. Today a pay less than Kshs.200 to pay the electricity bill, thus making a huge saving which I use for other purposes. With electricity available am planning to use it to pump water from the well for irrigation purpose where I will be growing some horticultural crops for sale.” *Bernard Ng’ang’a (2nd phase beneficiary)*

“I had started a pig rearing project from grants that I had been given by the Canada World Youth after participating in their programme. Green Fund assisted to boost this project as I bought more pigs and improved the pigsty. The project is very successful and it is an encouragement to other young people. However, I would recommend that beneficiaries of

the fund receive adequate and frequent trainings on business and financial management” Peter Kimani (2nd phase beneficiary).

The Green Fund loan given to my group (Magina Yes You Can Self Help Group) helped the members of the group to improve their livelihood in many ways. We decided to loan the same to the members thus establishing micro finance as one of our activities. The main objective of the group is for members to own Dairy goats. The members are doing this by cross breeding the local goats with the pedigree Alphine dairy goat so as to improve milk production. So most of the members loaned the money to purchase goats while a few invested in small scale businesses like tailoring and dress making. Some members who bought pure pedigree Alphine goats are now producing milk for their family consumption. As a result of dairy goat farming, Magina Yes You can Self Help Group is now a registered member of Lari Division Dairy Goats Association and the Dairy Goat Association of Kenya. These associations are assisting us with training and how to manage dairy goat farming, value addition and marketing of goat and their products. From the investments the members are able to pay school fees for their children and are repaying the loans on monthly basis which we in turn pay to KENVO. We hope that ones we finish repaying the loan to KENVO, we shall get more so that more of our members can benefit and because the terms given by KENVO are very simple and accommodative to the community. (Stephen Kusero-chairman Magina Yes You Can Self Group).



Fig 9; Pig Rearing Project by one of the Green fund loan beneficiary

“I invested my Green Fund loan in a cloth selling business which I gave my sister to manage. She is able to support her family from the proceeds of the business thus improving her livelihood. We also pay school fees for our younger siblings from the proceeds of the business. *Leah Mwangi (1st phase beneficiary)*

Appendix 2: Institutional Survey in Southern and Western Aberdare.

Introduction

Kijabe Environment Volunteers (KENVO) carried out a three day institutional Survey in the Southern and Western Aberdare forest with the purpose of finding out the situation on the ground in preparation for Participatory Forest Management (PFM) in the region as well as the community groups that are operating in the region. In summary, the objectives of the survey were:

- Collect a database for community groups working with the Forest Department in the region
- Find out the measures the forest department is putting on the ground in preparation for the PFM
- Assess the challenges the Forest officers are facing while working with the community.
- Assess the community needs in reference to PFM.

Methodology

The survey took the form of discussion whereby all the forest stations in the region were visited and the issues discussed with the forester and where possible a representative of the community was also involved. The information gathered would then be used to for an information base that can then be used to improve the situation on the ground. A total of four forest stations were visited in addition to two District Forest Offices and an NGO. The forest stations are spread across Nyandarua District from South Kinangop to Ndaragwa.

Results

Some residents from particularly those near the forest have come together to form self help groups. The groups are made up of forest users mainly the grazers and those who collect firewood. The members assist the department in silviculture activities, protection, reforestation, and boundary clearing while they benefit from grazing, collection of firewood and rafters. There are more groups in the division under the rural forest division but they are not involved in forest activities.

Challenges

- High expectations from the community
- Poor group management
- Conflict between group members and forest guards
- Negative attitude from the community towards the Department, the community is still treating the department with a lot of suspicion

Preparation for PFM

The forest has assisted the community groups to form the groups, which are divided according to the forest blocks that are under Kiburu forest station. At the moment, they are working towards forming an umbrella association that will bring all the groups together.

Appendix 3: Training and workshops

Training on Group Leadership and group management

A number of groups were trained on group leadership. This was after the survey that had found that at Kikuyu Escarpment Landscape, there are number of community groups but they have a problem on sustainability. To help the group address this problem; KENVO develop a curriculum of group which was found to be major concern and largely contributed to down fall of many groups

Training Curriculum on group Management

This aimed at building the capacity of the various group leaders present to effectively and successfully manage the groups

1.1 Definition of a group:

- People who have come together to find solution for a common problem.
- People who share a common vision and who are willing to work together towards realizing the vision.
- Gathering of people who come together to accomplish a task
- Value interaction among each other as they work towards a common goal or purpose.
- They share ideas, suggestions, skills and activities.

1.2 Elements of a good group

Shared common goals-needs specific goals to which all members have agreed

Prioritize the goals if more than one-every member should know what the group is working towards, what goals are more important than others.

Trust among members-each member is important to functioning of the group. View your self and others group as such-thus able to respect others trust that each member is sincerely working for the benefit of the group and value contribution of each one.

Rules and by laws-understand the rules and procedures by which it functions. Have written by laws by which it will operate (involve all members)

Leadership and delegation-have strong leadership to provide direction and assist members in their work. However leaders should delegate tasks to group members so that everyone can play a part in the functioning of the group.

Participation-all members should have opportunity to participate. Be willing and prepared to volunteer their skills, abilities, talents to the cause of the group .They should feel part and parcel of the group, so they can own the decision making process of the group functioning.

Motivation-this is the drive as desire to pursue goals; members must be motivated. They should feel enthusiastic about working towards the goals of the group and building group cohesiveness.

1.3 Motivation of members

- Provide them with means of satisfying their needs
- Encourage team work (social belonging needs)
- Status title, giving periodical rewards, appreciation, and recognition e.g. thank you that was very good, would you please.

- Regular training to help improve skills
- Delegating duties to the members where;
 - D**-Deciding what to delegate
 - E**-Electing the person to be the delegate
 - L**-Listing what is involved
 - E**-Explaining the task
 - G**-Giving adequate training
 - A**-Allowing freedom to work
 - T**-Telling others about the delegation
 - E**-Evaluating the performance
- Communication-members need to know what is taking place and how they fit in the whole process thus need to be informed. Make announcement of decision and activities.

NB: Leaders should be available for informal consultation by members.

1.4 Processes of forming a group

The formation of a group starts with an individual who realizes that there is a common problem affecting the community. The individual then start sharing ideas with other members of the community and it is from this sharing that the like minded individuals start the process. In summary process of forming a group is as follows:

- An individual or several individuals realizes there is a common problem
- Develop and share ideas with others
- Come together to develop a common vision, objectives and activities
- Rules and regulations as well as membership developed
- Leaders chosen
- Registration of the group with the necessary government departments to acquire legal status.
- Start working towards the vision (activities)
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Progressing

1.5 Qualities of a good leader

- Compassionate good/upright morals
- Available
 - Honest and reliable
 - Good listener
 - Temperament (positive)
 - Punctual
 - Concerned of others
 - Flexible
 - Active
 - Confident and confidentiality.
 - Open and clear
 - Accountable and transparent
 - Gives equal opportunities and treatment
 - Accessible
 - Interpersonal skills
 - Reasonable
 - Realistic
 - Creative and innovative

- Sober mind
- Willing to delegate
- Gender sensitive

1.6 Stages of group growth

Forming- Members are just coming together; they are excited as they are new to each other and have great ideas. This is the infancy stage and very delicate

Storming- There is a lot of infighting within the group, members are not willing to contribute and there is sectionalism i.e. camps within the group. There is also struggle for power. The stage is likened to a baby crawling and starting to take the first step. It is very unstable and if care is not taken the group it may cease to exist. At this stage some members leave the group.

Norming- The group starts to normalize, the remaining members starts to chat way to work towards the vision. There is also stability in leadership. At this stage only genuine members who are committed to the goal of the group remains.

Performing- Tangible results can be seen of what the group is doing i.e. activities of the group and achievements can be seen. The group is also known even to those whop are not members. It is achieving its goals and there is a lot of admiration from others. New members also want to join the group.

Transforming- The group has already achieved its goal or task, it may either dissolve (cease to exist) or transform and come up with anew task or goal. Some of the old members may leave them and new ones join depending on the new task to be carried out.

Appendix 4: Workshops on Forest Acts and Environmental Laws in Kenya

Several workshops involving a number of groups were held to sensitize the community forest and environmental legislations. The community participation in forest management is of great importance to the community groups, of equally importance is the enforcement of the Act. However the groups should ensure that they understand the whole Act and how it affects them.

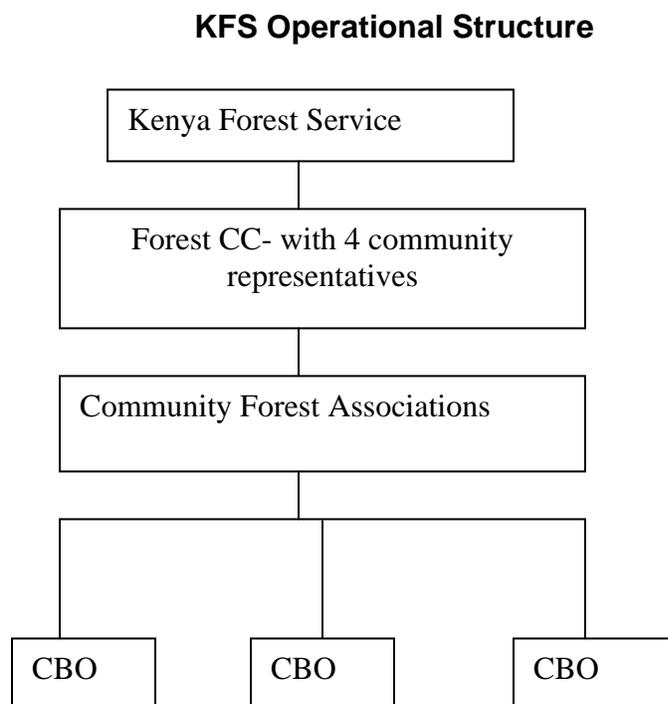
The Forest Act 2005

The Following topics of the Acts were covered:

1. Preliminary
2. Administration
3. Creations
4. Community participation
5. Enforcement
6. Miscellaneous-rules and regulations
7. Transition from Forest Department to Kenya Forest Services

Kenya Forest Service Structure

KFS will be working with the stake holders as provided by the act as shown by the diagram below:



On the Environment Management and Coordination Act (EMCA) 1999.

The following sections as explained were also covered in a number of community forums;

Enactment and creation of Kenya National Environment Management Authority

The Act was passed in 1999 but was enacted (came into force) on 14th January 2000. To enforce the Act, the Kenya National Environment Management Authority was formed and became operational on 1st July 2002.

NEMAs' mandate

The authority is mandated by the act to exercise general supervision and coordination over all matters relating to the environment and to be the principal instrument of the government in the implementation of all environmental policies.

Vision

To be a world class environmental authority that ensures a healthy environment for all.

Mission

Safeguard and enhance the quality of the environment through coordination, research, facilitation and enforcement, while encouraging responsible individual, corporate and collective participation towards sustainable development.

General principles

- Promote consultation and public participation on all matters relating to development of policies, plans, and processes for the management of the environment.
- Respect cultural, social and traditional norms and values that are consistent with laws for enhancing the quality of the environment.
- Promote international cooperation in the management of environmental resources shared by Kenya and any of its neighbors
- Promote inter-generational and intra- generational equity
- Polluter- pays principle
- Precautionary principle

Under NEMA several committee were set to coordinate its activities at various levels with the lowest level being the Location Environment committee- Division Environment Committee- District Environment Committee-Provincial Environment committee-NEMA. It is headed by a Director while at the district level there is the District Environment Officer.

Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)

Why EIA-This is done to ensure that there is no negative impact on the environment and where there is a likelihood of this to occur, the need to prevent it (mitigate) and come up with ways of ensuring that the environment is protected. It also ensures that the person undertaking a project is well aware of its impact on the environment and is prepared to contribute to the protection of the environment. EIA is usually carried by experts who are licensed by NEMA.

Projects that need EIA are listed in EMCA 99 section 8

Appendix 5: Topics and presentation in community workshops

A number of community workshops were held to discuss issues affecting Kikuyu Escarpment forests and sort for solutions. Further other social issues affecting community and well thought to have be impacting on biodiversity conservation were also discussed;

Some objectives of the workshop included;

- Awareness of the importance, threat and opportunities in the Kikuyu Escarpment forest
- Awareness on the Forest Act 2005 among the forest guards
- Influence change of attitude among the community and forest guards towards participatory forest management.
- Empower the community and forest officers to handle and manage conflicts
- Awareness on HIV/AIDS among the forest guards.

Methodology/Approach

During these workshops an integrated approach involving open discussions, presentations by experts, experience sharing and question and answer sessions were used

Community expectations in these included

- Meet with the existing conservation groups and exchange ideas
- Share experience with others
- How to balance the available manpower across the station
- Who is KENVO
- Implementation of the Forest Act(Enforcement)
- Environment management
- No fine for offenders according to the new act
- How to properly prosecute and make follow up to court cases
- How to work as a team
- How to train the forest staff to efficiently manage the forest
- Addressing working conditions of the guards including promotions
- Introduction to K.F.S and working style
- Chain of command in forest guards posts
- How to improve communication in the stations
- Way forward on transformation from Forest Department to Kenya Forest Service
- What are powers of CFAS
- How to improve communications in forest stations
- How to handle conflicts.
- How to handle cases when attacked by destructors

Some challenges faced by forest officers at Kikuyu included;

- Difficulties working with the community
- Shortage of personnel
- Poor means of transport especially for the offenders
- Living conditions poor/shortage of houses
- Long distance between guard post and office station
- Lack of enough working equipments
- Lack of uniforms(inadequate)

- Tough duties to female guards
- Female guards work late hours and they have family duties
- Misunderstanding between the guards and foresters
- Few numbers of ladies per forest station(gender imbalance)
- Interdictions causing disappointments
- Conflict between forest guards and Kenya police especially in handling of cases.
- Duty allocation, long working hours and understaffing
- No arms in the outposts
- Insecurity in outposts
- Lack of support by station office especially when having problems
- Attack by community members especially when offenders are arrested
- Lack of proper legal representation when one is implicated in court
- Poor salaries
- Transfers and collaboration with the senior officer(forester)

A presentation of Kikuyu Escarpment Forest By KENVO

The Kikuyu Escarpment has an area of 38000 ha and is managed by Kenya Forest Service and it is made up of seven forest blocks namely; Kieni, Kamae, Kinale, Keriita, Uplands, Thogoto, Ragia The Kikuyu Escarpment forest is an important bird area with rare species of both plant and animals including avifauna.

Importance of the forest

- Herbal medicine and wild fruits
- Domestic use (fuel wood and fodder crop)
- Very significant for research and tourism activities
- An important catchments site
- Has historic significance(sacred and freedom struggle)
- Fauna(animals)-elephants, leopards, Columbus and Sykes monkeys, small animals like galagos
- Avifauna (138species of birds recorded,31 forest specialists, and 20 considered rare)
- Has more than 100 species of trees

Conservation issues

- High population
- Illegal logging
- Commercial fuel wood
- Debarking
- Grazing
- Weaving

Why the loss?

- Mismanagement and corruption
- Lack of required info-awareness
- Ignorance
- Poor recognition of community effort
- Poor balancing between conservation and livelihoods

- Economy dictating conservations
- Poor government policy on forest management (conflict and non- cohesive)
- How can we benefit from this?
- Lessons learned
- Balancing conservation needs and livelihoods
- Let there be a dialogue between stakeholders
- Create awareness by bringing people together
- Community mobilization for biodiversity conservation is possible
- Active communities' participation is essential

Appendix 6: Conflict and conflict management

Another issue that was found to affect smooth work at Kikuyu Escarpment was conflicts within and outside groups. This was warranted KENVO to develop a training curriculum on conflicts resolutions and management with the following topics

What is conflict?

- Misunderstanding of ideas by two parties
- Arguments differences between two parties
- Clash between two parties differing in opinion

Levels of conflict

- Conflicts can occur.
- Within an individual
- Within a household
- Between extended family groups
- Within a community
- Between communities and extended organizations
- Between different ethnic groups
- Between political parties
- Between countries

Types of issues/ situations that contribute to a conflict

- Conflicting interests
- Information issues
- Difficult relationships
- Structural issues
- Conflicting values

1. Conflicting interests

Elements

Conflict over differing needs and desires, sharing of benefits and resource use
Include perceived and actual competition of interest
Conflicts can emerge from perceived or actual lack of shared interests.

2. Information issues

Elements

Conflicts caused by lack of information or differences in interpretation of information
Can be linked to differing methods of assessing, evaluating or interpreting information
Poor communication (listening or expression) or miscommunication among disputing parties

3. Difficult relationships

Elements

Conflicts caused by lack of information or differences in interpretation of information
Can be linked to differing methods of assessing, evaluating or interpreting information
Poor communication (listening or expression) or miscommunication among disputing parties

4. Structural issues

Elements

- Differing ideas regarding appropriate management processes, rules, roles and power: can apply to meetings, committees or organizations.
- Perceived or actual inequality or unfairness concerning power, control, ownership or structures that influence access to or contribution of resources.
- Factors that hinder cooperation such as decision-making structures and responsibilities, time constraints, geography or physical settings.

5. Conflicting values

Elements

- Cultural, social or personal differences or different world views and traditions may bring a conflict.
- Can include different goals, expectations or assumptions that reflect personal history and upbringing.

Conflict management

- In analyzing conflict, the following tips are helpful:
- See the conflict from an objective point of view
- Discover what precisely is going on in the conflict , on a variety of levels,
- Increase your personal awareness of the issues contributing to the conflict,
- Identify your own priorities and areas of flexibility.

Conflict management strategies

1. Response to conflict through FORCE

Characteristics

- The attempt of one group to impose its interests over others
- Can involve violence, threats, harassments, use of supernatural powers, peer pressure, economic and policy sanctions, and pressure through mass media and intimidation.
- Creates hostilities and resentment
- Outcome uncertain
- Parties have no interest in maintaining a relationship
- Results in win-lose situation

2. Response to conflict through AVOIDANCE

Characteristics

- Neglects interests of both parties by postponing decisions, retreating, using delaying tactics.
- May seem easier than getting involved

- Results in lose-lose situation if used in isolation
- Results in only a temporary solution

3. Response to conflict through ACCOMMODATION

Characteristics

- Satisfies the other parties interests, while neglecting your own needs
- May be used when parties are unwilling to take time
- May be used when one party has more power or is willing to preserve the relationship

Results in lose-win situation

4. Response to conflict through COMPROMISE

Characteristics

- Useful for quick solutions
- Both parties make a sacrifice in order to achieve a mutually workable solution
- Parties must give something in order to gain something else
- Results in a sort of win-win yet lose-lose situation

5. Response to conflict through COLLABORATION

Characteristics

- Works to satisfy all interests and needs
- Focuses on goals and consensus agreements
- Takes time so that all parties are actively and equally involved in the process
- Results in a win-win situation
- Used when it is important that both parties be committed to the resolution