

APM Project Management Awards



WINNER'S

CASE STUDY



Category **International Relief and Development Project of the Year 2011**

Winner **World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) RUMAKI Seascape**

Sponsor **FUJITSU**

Overview

In the Rufiji, Mafia and Kilwa coastal districts of Tanzania, around 150,000 people depend on fishing for their living. But in 2005 their future looked bleak – with unsustainable fishing practices, degradation of marine habitats and loss of fisheries production. This was the background to the WWF Rufiji Delta-Mafia Island-Kilwa District (RUMAKI) Seascape Project.

This six-year, £3m project aimed to improve the socio-economic outlook of the area by putting the responsibility for local fisheries' decision making, revenue collection and

long-term sustainability into local hands.

Challenges for the project team included convincing fishermen that long-term sustainability was as important as that day's catch, and engaging women into a male-dominated culture to encourage fresh perspectives.

They also had to deal with local leaders' political machinations and to ensure that the project was managed in tune with coastal Swahili, Islamic culture.

After six years, key results from the project include improvements in fish stocks; the development of national



guidelines on fisheries co-management which have been adopted by the Tanzanian government; and the successful establishment of 76 loans and savings groups in 25 villages.

Objectives

When the project launched in 2005, its main goal was 'to improve the socio-economic wellbeing of coastal communities in Rufiji, Mafia and Kilwa through sustainable, participatory and equitable utilisation and protection of their marine resources'. To achieve this, the project team set a target of establishing six functioning fisheries co-management areas by 2011. The guiding principle was local stewardship through devolution of powers; putting decision-making and revenue-collection into local hands and giving communities the incentive to manage fishing activities for long-term sustainable productivity. If successful, the management areas would be replicated by the government along the entire 800km coastline of mainland Tanzania, and by WWF and partners in other projects globally.

While the overall goal and objectives remained constant, the project's detailed scope and approach was adapted through a process of trial and adjustment during its five years.

Resources

The total cost of the project over the five years was £3m, with support provided by WWF UK (through funding from DFID, the EC and Barclays Bank) as well as from the Norwegian Government, Japanese Social Development Fund and WWF-Switzerland. The programme was implemented by a team of 12 WWF staff, three based in Dar es Salaam, the remainder divided between field

offices in Mafia and Kilwa Districts. The team's expertise covered project management, fisheries and aquaculture, community extension, microfinance, communications, monitoring and project accounting. In addition the programme benefited from participation by personnel from the Ministry of Livestock Development & Fisheries and three district councils in Mafia, Rufiji and Kilwa.

Resource needs were managed through a co-ordinated effort by the WWF international network. The WWF Tanzania Country Office undertook primary technical and financial resources management. WWF UK provided core funding and strategic technical support and leveraged additional funding, as did WWF Norway.

Challenges

The project was designed to address the problem of declining fish stocks by establishing more sustainable fishing practices. To do this, the project team needed to overcome a number of tactical challenges, such as convincing the fishermen that long-term sustainability was as important as today's catch; engaging women in micro-finance and fisheries management initiatives in a male-dominated society and ensuring the project was nonetheless managed in tune with coastal Swahili, Islamic culture.

In addition, there was a major challenge for the project team in changing the mindset of local people. In order to succeed, the team needed to communicate effectively to 23 communities (approx. 50,000 people) the opportunity represented by fisheries co-management. However, Tanzania has a history of centralised state government, so concepts such as local empowerment and self-governance were new to many and needed to be demonstrated in terms of the benefits they would bring.

Co-ordination

Given the communication challenges outlined above, the project team needed to establish local community partnerships and demonstrate the benefits of local empowerment in a very practical way.

The project team therefore began by investing resources over a two-year period in focused livelihood support, in particular establishing a network of microfinance groups throughout target villages. This was complemented with projects promoting small-scale enterprise and aquaculture. The microfinance groups in particular were successful, and the livelihood focus succeeded in characterising the project as one that had community welfare at its heart. This provided a context into which fisheries management was introduced as yet another strategy through which to strengthen livelihoods.

To ensure it engaged effectively with the large target community, the project team also set up a network of 'change agents' recruited from district and ward officials (a ward combines three villages), with support of WWF programme staff. Their work was supplemented with a programme of communication materials, seminars and in-village video events designed to communicate key principles in a cultural format and context that would be readily received. This included the involvement of Islamic religious leaders who assisted with framing principles in terms aligned with Qu'ranic teaching.

Project successes

By June 2011, 23 villages had established village-level fisheries management groups. Of these, 21 of them worked together to delineate six collaborative fisheries management areas embracing over 1,500 square kilometres of sea. They had developed collaborative management plans and by-laws that included no-take replenishment zones and restrictions on outside fishers.

Local people were also demonstrably engaged in conserving fish stocks, with 11 villages actively conducting patrols, confiscating illegal fishing gear, compiling catch data and collecting revenues to run their operations sustainably.

There were also signs that these activities were having a positive effect on fish stocks. Fishermen in at least one management area were reporting improvements in fish catches as a result of a reduction in the use of illegal small-mesh seine nets, formerly widespread in the area.

At the same time, the project team had also achieved success in establishing microfinance schemes, with 76 village savings and loans groups established, each with around 30 members.

Finally, as a result of the project, national guidelines were developed on how to establish fisheries co-management, and the Government of Tanzania has now adopted these as national guidelines.





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The awards reflect the invaluable contribution project managers make in all sectors of society and the event provides an opportunity for industry professionals to meet with colleagues and entertain guests as well as celebrate at one of the year's most exciting events.

Highly regarded in the project management industry, the awards reflect the dedication and talent that helps to shape the project management community and the world around us. The finalists, winners and sponsors of the awards attract national publicity for their achievement and involvement. Winning an award provides invaluable recognition and kudos to the careers of winners.

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