



## ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME SUPPORT AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME SUCCESS STORIES

### TEACHING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Visitors to Kenya are often stunned by its attitude towards the environment. Travelers throw their rubbish out of the windows of buses, trees are hacked down with no thought about the future and raw sewage is pumped into the ocean. The environment is only just becoming an issue in Kenya.

Projects like Danida's DKK 167 million Environmental Programme Support (EPS) are helping the people of Kenya realise that the environment is an urgent issue that should concern everyone.

Danida has been working hard with the Kenyan government and its partners to ensure that the leaders of tomorrow are aware about environmental issues and understand how their actions will affect the whole country and indeed the world. Key to this has been work on getting the environment onto the curriculum of Kenyan schools and universities. Communicating these messages has been integral to EPS.

David Ong'are, Deputy Director of Kenya's National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) has spearheaded work on this. NEMA now sits on the national curriculum board and it is working in other areas of education too.

"We have worked with different categories of learning institutions from universities to primary schools", says David. "And it hasn't always been plain sailing".



*Tree planting is part of good natural resource management*

As part of a Danida-funded Environmental Education Awareness Initiative, NEMA has worked with the Kenyan Ministry of the Environment and Mineral Resources (MEMR) to increase awareness in 114 primary schools. They have been encouraged to start tree nurseries as a way of teaching about the importance of the environment.

NEMA has also worked closely with the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) to get the environment integrated into all its courses. NEMA's Ong'are and his colleagues first tried to work with individual lecturers at the institution but made little progress. Danida funding was flexible enough that they could change this approach as soon as they realised it wasn't working. They identified the Vice Chancellor of the University as the key person they

needed to persuade and asked NEMA's director to approach him personally.

"It was important to engage with the top decision maker," says Ong'are. He invited Professor George Ndegwa and a small team appointed by the vice chancellor of JKUAT to visit NEMA. Then they developed their policies together.

Following a series of seminars and a lot of hard work, they came up with a step-by-step programme, which means that next year environmental teaching will be fully integrated into JKUAT's curriculum, making it the only institution of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa to incorporate education for sustainable development in its activities. A great example of funding from the Danish people contributing to making the whole world a better place.



*The effects of sand harvesting in Machakos*

## ADVOCACY FOR SUSTAINABLE SAND HARVESTING

Monica Musyoki woke up one day to find people had come in the night and stolen her farm – not the title deeds, the buildings or the equipment but the very soil itself. Hundreds of cubic metres of fertile earth had been carved out of the riverbank that bordered her farm and trucked away to fuel the building boom in nearby Nairobi. She is not alone; the same kind of thing has happened and continues to happen to hundreds of her neighbours in this desperately poor area where one of the few assets – sand – is non-renewable, its extraction, fundamentally irreversible.

In partnership with Sida and the Kenyan government, Danida has been able to bring new hope to Monica and the people of Kenya's Ukambani area by encouraging previously cowed residents like Monica to know and fight for their rights.

The poor and marginal area around Machakos in Ukambani is famed for being the first place in Kenya to need food aid in times of drought. It is also well-known for the excellence of its sand – a key ingredient of Kenya's burgeoning construction industry. Unscrupulous developers in Nairobi, allied with corrupt local policemen and provincial authorities have been removing sand from the area without paying the residents the going rate – or, as in Monica's case, without paying at all. It has caused great individual hardship but also communal suffering because of the destruction of tree cover, the erosion of riverbanks and the loss of topsoil.

Danida and Sida donated DKK 167 million to Kenya through its Environmental Programme Support. Of this, DKK 56.5 million went to the Community Development Trust Fund, a funding mechanism administered to exacting standards with support from the European Union. Community level groups were asked to submit proposals to the CDTF on the condition that local communities provided a proportion of the funding and were fully involved in the implementation of any project approved. After stringent vetting, one of the successful candidates to the fund was the Poverty Eradication Network, an advocacy organisation that has been working in Ukambani's Machakos area since 2003.

"Sand in Machakos is a security issue, it is a water issue, it is an in issue that is cutting across all other sectors" says Mary Mutuku, one of PEN's project officers.

PEN put together a proposal that hoped to address all those issues: it combined education and action. It required a lot of thought as people in the area are desperately poor and harvest sand themselves for survival purposes, not just for profit. There were five key parts to PEN's proposal:

- Education on sustainable harvesting methods
- Training on environmental legislation
- Assistance to set up tree nurseries and other environmental measures
- Interactive communications strategies to help build awareness
- Intercession with the local administration to police the harvesting

Life is a hard struggle for the residents of Ukambani because they are up against big money and vested interests, often facilitated by corrupt government employees who should be policing the trade. A truck load of sand worth twenty dollars in Ukumbani can be sold for twenty times that in Nairobi, just a couple of hours drive away. But with just a small amount of funding from Danida (DKK 338,200) real inroads have been made into addressing the problem.

PEN insured that there was proven community investment, rigorous monitoring and evaluation and clear identification of target groups. It exploited the multiplier effect by using local FM radio and making partnerships with women's groups who produced seedlings to restock degraded areas and spread the word to their contacts with PEN literature and T-shirts.

PEN also persuaded a local headmaster to start a tree-planting project at his school and to teach children about the perils of unregulated sand harvesting. The immediate benefit of the project is already visible only two years after it started: people can now shelter from the sun under trees planted with PEN encouragement. Danida's funding has allowed people like Monica to advocate for change and provide alternatives so that her kids no longer have to "drop out of school to come and work here loading sand into lorries".

Well-planned, well-monitored interventions on behalf of the people of Denmark can make a big difference to residents of areas like Ukambani. For people like Monica, they already have.