

End of Project Report

For

Scott Bader Commonwealth Limited

Name of charity:	Ecologia Youth Trust		
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Amount of grant awarded:	£1,000	Grant Received:	May 2014
Purpose of Grant:	Introduction of a Youth Engagement and Empowerment Initiative in Kitale, Kenya – tree-planting module		
Report Due:	May 2015		

Aim of the project



The overall aim of the project was to train 500 young people from Kitale, Kenya, in organic agriculture, permaculture and renewable energy techniques. Scott Bader's contribution to this project funded the tree planting, seed saving and compost production module, designed to ensure biodiversity, independence and the promotion and survival of indigenous plants.

Since 2008, our Kenyan partner, OTEPIC, has been teaching organic agriculture and permaculture skills, natural resource management skills, and renewable energy techniques to young people living in slums and poor communities of Kitale, North Western Kenya, as a way of giving them the tools to lift themselves out of poverty and to conserve nature and biodiversity in an area suffering from extreme poverty, unemployment, poor nutrition, and environmental degradation.

Care of the natural environment is an urgent issue in Kitale, an area largely dependent on agriculture. The use of commercial fertilisers by farmers in Kitale, in an attempt to increase their crop yields, has had adverse effects on the land, leading to extreme loss in biodiversity and fertility. This has seriously reduced agricultural production and put a huge strain on already poor households that depend on farming for their own food as well as for generating a small income. Furthermore, in the past, Kitale received adequate levels of rainfall, but as is the case in much of East Africa, this has been significantly disrupted by climate change, resulting in unpredictable and inadequate rainfall patterns. When it does rain, inadequate sewage systems cause raw sewage to overflow into nearby springs, the water from which is used regularly by locals for cooking, etc. The majority of families depend primarily on wood for their energy needs, the burning of which has led to alarming levels of deforestation and which generates substantial greenhouse emissions.

As is too often the case in communities where there is a high level of poverty, it is children and young people that suffer disproportionately. However, they also carry hope for the future if they can be engaged to change damaging practices and adopt and promote environmentally sustainable practices.

OTEPIC's Youth Engagement and Empowerment programme provides various modules to support this change, including permaculture and organic agriculture trainings, and eco-technology construction and sale skills trainings, so that participants can earn an income and preserve the environment at the same time.

This tree-planting module, funded by Scott Bader, aimed to empower young people to take responsibility for conserving nature and biodiversity in Kitale themselves and to understand how best to work together to do so. The module included training on the importance of tree-planting, on seed collection, how to establish tree nurseries, how to plant trees properly, a huge tree-planting exercise using over 5,000 seeds, and promoting a seed exchange programme between schools.

Key Achievements

The 6-month tree-planting programme was hugely successful, far exceeding the 500-beneficiary target, by reaching 4290 children and youth from seven Kitale schools and one youth group of the Tranzoia west district.

The programme was carried out as planned:

- Training on the importance of reforestation.
- Training on seed collection from the natural environment
- Training on tree nursery establishment
- Training on proper tree planting
- Mass tree planting exercise (5,000 trees)
- Promotion of seeds exchange activities between participating schools

The school pupils responded to the challenge with enthusiasm, and gave the feedback that they would continue to collect seeds and plant trees around the area.

Lessons learned/Unexpected outcomes

Community enthusiasm:

Our partner was very surprised by the fact that over 700 members of the local community, from small children to older adults spontaneously came to help with the planting aspects of the project at each location, making it a truly community-wide event. In addition, different ethnic groups mixed with each other in a way not usual in the area. As OTEPIC explained, *"Another great sign of success is the positive feedback from the community. We have had many neighbours come to see what we are doing. They are surprised by the techniques we use and our vision, and often they praise us or ask if they can join. In this way, we had a steady support crew throughout our work time."*

Project Management on a larger scale:

OTEPIC needed to extend the scope of the project for three reasons: a) it received requests for more pupils to participate from its pre-selected beneficiary schools, b) two more schools and a large youth group also requested to participate, c) the above-mentioned local community members wished to participate. The staff, on deciding to accommodate them, found themselves in a learning curve of managing a project on a far larger scale than was normal for them, having to adapt to these unexpected outcomes. They did so very successfully and have learnt a lot from the experience in terms of planning, organisational skills, communications skills and logistics.



Case study: Peter Kasiti



Peter, aged 15, attends Maziwa school. His parents are farmers, but he has never been interested in farming because it is not profitable and is getting more difficult because the land is less and less fertile. He has explained how the training programme has changed his attitude to caring for the local environment and how that impacts on farming and life in Kitale. "We have learned a lot in terms of selecting the seeds and nurturing seedlings till they mature. We understand that nature is so unforgiving, if you destroy nature, nature will destroy you. Before, I thought it was the responsibility of teachers and parents to organise tree planting, but now I've volunteered to organise my fellow students into groups who will be responsible for collecting seeds in the forest, setting up small tree nurseries, and watering the trees."

Case study: Sara Nangeke

Sara, aged 20, has recently completed high school and is currently unemployed. She came to support the project because she has been to some OTEPIC trainings and is becoming interested in issues concerning conservation and organic farming. She explains, "Before I heard about OTEPIC's projects, I thought that it was the responsibility of the municipal government to plant and care for trees. I have come to realise that it is our responsibility to take care of the environment. We all have a duty to play to conserve and also to plant trees that will benefit the future generation." She explains that for most young people in Kitale farming is considered to be too unprofitable and only for those who are not educated enough to get a 'better' job. She now understands the importance of sustainable farming in the area and that different techniques can make a huge difference to income generation and land management. She now intends to work with issues concerning conservation and sustainable farming.



Project expenditure:

ITEM	Expenditure
Seedlings: 5,000 trees @ approx. £0.07/ tree	£366
Tools and equipment: soil sieves, digging hoes, etc	£60
Transport: transporting staff & trees during project, & follow up transport costs	£100
Food costs:	£40
Staff Allowance Stipend:	£167
Administrative Costs: photocopies, hiring, chairs, documentation, training material development, photos	£67
Project Management, monitoring and evaluation UK	£200
TOTAL:	£1,000

Ecologia Youth Trust would like to thank Scott Bader Commonwealth for your support, which has made a huge difference to the lives of vulnerable young people in Kitale, Kenya.

