

Ground work involving the Beach Management Units

For sustainable development of the Kenyan South Coast, more extensive involvement of the local people in generating ideas and developing projects is needed. This was confirmed by a status analysis in 2011. The Beach Management Units, self-organisations of fishermen at the landing sites, could be the driving force behind this. In 2012 their members were specially trained for this purpose.



A report by Barua Omar Mshenga

The status report on the situation on the Kenyan South Coast, compiled in Autumn 2011 by Technology and Care for Improved Livelihoods (TECA-FILI), made it clear that the people along the South Coast of Kenya were consistently unhappy with the lack of civic participation in the planning, development and implementation of projects. This state of affairs is perceived as a significant barrier to establishing sustainable development.

Workshop: Participation from the outset

There are many different ways for citizens to be involved in the planning and implementation of development programmes. They range from the expectation of obtaining results from a programme to the local municipal community actively shaping the project and making the implementation of such project its own affair.

A workshop was devised on the basis of this status report, which was held in Tiwi, on the Kenyan South Coast, in March 2012. This workshop was directed towards representatives of the Beach Management Units (BMUs) from the various landing sites in southern Mombasa. Some 20 participants attended the two-day seminar and focused on the basics of project development, fundraising and writing project proposals. Different ideas for projects were discussed in five groups, and put into formal project proposals to be submitted to potential funding institutions. They dealt with the following topics:

- Support for the purchase of new fishing gear,
- The promotion of eco-tourism and locally managed marine sanctuaries,
- Processing and selling fish,
- Access to microloans and
- Developing infrastructure at the landing site.

Evaluation of the workshop

The high level of motivation among the participants showed that the workshop was important to the fishermen. Multiple members of the BMUs unexpectedly expressed their interest, who unfortunately could not take part because of limited means and the already advanced stages of planning. This was a clear sign of the desire and the readiness of the BMUs to take active part in project development.



A two-day programme informed participants about the particular tasks of the BMUs.

Overall, two days were not sufficient to convey the necessary background information. The participants considered two weeks training to be necessary in order to obtain comprehensive knowledge.

It was not possible to provide detailed documentation and supporting materials. This will be handed out at a later date. One of the participants praised the fact that this was apparently the only workshop in which the cultural and religious background of the participants was respected. This meant that condoms were not distributed, which is often perceived as an encouragement to promiscuity. Nevertheless, the problematic issues of HIV and AIDS were addressed, coupled with the encouragement for protection against it.

The workshop was praised as being an eye-opener for the BMU representatives. The acquired skills and knowledge will be integrated into

the management of the respective BMUs. All participants shared the opinion that much was learnt.

It was recognised that this was the first workshop in which the fishing community was involved in planning and designing projects. The participants hope that the spirit of participation will continue during the implementation of future projects. All participants confirmed that their expectations of the workshop had been met.



It was shown how to construct and operate a simple fish farm using a practical example.

Getting to know each other better

A visitors programme in September 2012 gave participants the opportunity to see the situation at other landing sites and exchange experiences concerning BMU management. The event became a platform to compare the effectiveness of various BMUs and to identify deficits and possible weaknesses. The participants were to discuss possibilities for the planned use of resources in coastal waters. Making contacts between the various BMUs at the landing sites along the South Coast should help to address the growing problem of resource usage and the resulting conflicts.

Altogether 31 participants (25 men and 6 women) from BMUs in Likoni, Mvuleni, Chale, Gazi, Munje, Shimoni, Kibuyuni and Majoreni, took part in the visitor exchange programme. The majority of the participants held offices related to BMU management, or were BMU board members.

Each landing site visit lasted between two to

three hours. The topics of discussion were structured in advance and were centred on the history of the BMUs, activities and projects, internal management, success stories and challenges. During the two-day exchange the entire group spent a night in Shimoni, in order to have time to visit the remaining stations the following day. The activity had a particular charm due to the fact that the roles of guest and host were constantly reversed.



Transparent accounting avoids internal conflicts and is a requirement for the implementation of projects.

Communication and targeted education

In the second half of the year TECAFILI campaigned for an improved basis for further co-operation with the local communities along the Kenyan South Coast. The members of the BMUs were trained in several targeted measures and training sessions. With regular meetings on-site, workshops and seminars, the network within and between BMUs improved. Thanks to the further education of fishermen in both workshops and on excursions it will become easier to establish Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) in various coastal areas.

Project activities

The aim of a visitors programme was for the members of the various BMUs to get to know one another and to get an insight into the situation at the individual landing sites. A minimum of four fishermen from each landing site, and a total of 32 people were selected by the BMU Committee to take part in the two-day programme.

The visits improved relationships and should, over and above the exchange of experiences, also generate a certain amount of competition among the participants to acquire the attributes of good BMU management. This issue had already been discussed in the previous workshop and was also readdressed later. The visits brought representatives from eight BMUs together and were a good opportunity to exchange practical experiences relating to BMU management or using natural resources at the respective landing sites. It was



Conflict resolution at landing sites was the topic of one of the workshops in Msambweni.

agreed to establish a strong relationship among themselves, in order to jointly tackle the conflict over the constantly increasing use of resources.

Three workshops were carried out during the term of the project. The first, right at the outset and with 16 participants, served to introduce the project and distribute information, to motivate reliable participation and request involvement in the project.

The experiences from the visitors programme were built upon in a second workshop with 31 participants. It was the platform for questions and feedback, served the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the visits and provided the opportunity to discuss further lines of action.

The last workshop at the end of the term of the project served to assess and evaluate the project. In this process, the outcomes, effectiveness, relevance and efficiency of the project ac-

tivities that had taken place were discussed. The nine participants took active part in and made a great contribution to the evaluation process.

Training

The core of this project was strengthening the community. The various training programmes were based on the following topics: Leadership and Team Building, Conflict Resolution, Business Administration and Marketing, Finance Management, Marine Conservation, LMMA (mariculture, aquaculture) and Deep Sea Fishing (practical experience).

| Topic | Participants |
|--|--------------|
| Mariculture / Aquaculture | 7 |
| Accounting | 8 |
| Business Administration and Marketing | 8 |
| Leadership and Team Building | 8 |
| Conflikt Management | 8 |
| Environment and Nature Conser- vation | 8 |
| Deep Sea Fishing in Practice | 8 |
| Total | 55 |

The three-day event on Mariculture and Aquaculture took place in the Zagota Hotel and Resort in Mtwapa, on the North Coast. The keynote speaker was Dr David Mirera of the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI), a well-known specialist on the topic. The workshop was designed as a way to introduce participants to the topic and further educate them with basic information and knowledge about mariculture as well as transferring the technology to the South Coast.

The five-day training course on Accounting should have provided a sound basis for financial management of the BMU budgets. The target groups were the BMU treasurers and those responsible for the finances of the eight BMUs. The training was given by a competent host, who motivated the participants in discussions and used case studies to train them for individual tasks. A questionnaire documented participants' feedback. This feedback on the various topic areas

ranged from „very good“ to “satisfactory”.

The four-day course on Business Administration and Marketing was carried out for the first time in the TECAFILI programme. Eight participants took part in the course as representatives of the eight BMUs. The instructor considered the course a success, although some adjustment with regards to transferring knowledge and passing on specialised information to participants is advisable.



A workshop addressed co-operation, teamwork and leadership skills in theory and practice.

Leadership Skills and Team Building are important assets for a successful and effective BMU. The expectations and demands on the BMUs are very high. The status analysis indicated that the majority of landing sites are far below the necessary levels of competence in leadership, conflict resolution and the sustainable exploitation of resources. The lack of transparency and accountability has continually led to mistrust and conflict. Financial reports are hardly ever presented to members, and elections only take place on an irregular basis.

During the three-day training course, various methods were practiced such as group discussion, brainstorming, case studies, storytelling and how to behave in question and answer situations with associated exercises and demonstrations. The participants were prompted to be more active and play a greater part in the learning process.

The training on Conflict Management was carried out in Msambweni with participants from the eight BMUs. Every fisherman on the South Coast is aware of the conflicts that exist mostly with „visiting“ fishermen, who use destructive fishing gear in local waters, and are even supported by some of the local fishermen.

This encroachment into important fishing waters is a bone of contention among the fishers. This training course imparted strategies for re-



Fishing on the open sea is teamwork and requires skill and extensive training.

solving conflicts that participants could later pass on to other members of the BMUs.

The two-day training course on Marine Nature and Environmental Protection dealt with the basics of marine ecology, the causes of marine pollution and their consequences. The training course achieved the aims it had set. With regards to the next steps, the participants agreed to support marine environment initiatives, including the establishment of community-based marine nature reserves, and to function as ambassadors for the protection of the marine environment. The practical training in Deep Sea Fishing lasted four days and took place at the landing site of Ngomeni on the North Coast. The course was possible thanks to the support of the Fisheries Department and the Kenya Marine Police, who ensured safety at sea. Participants from the BMUs in Likoni, Chale, Gazi, Munje, Shimoni, Kibuyuni and Majoreni attended the course.

The training covered the areas of safety at sea, practical sailing, and handling the fishing gear at sea. In conclusion all participants agreed that fishing with larger boats outside the reef required extensive training in order to become familiar with technology which was new to them and the necessary skills.

All training courses were extensively documented and accompanying handbooks have already been compiled to some extent.

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24.548 EUR

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