

**Kabuthi Stream Pilot Project, Kenya  
Proposed by the Tweed Kenya Mentoring Program**

**REPORT ON VISIT TO KENYA NOV - DEC 2006**

**HISTORY**

Tweed Shire Council established its "twinning program" with Kenya in May 2004, despite not yet having won the Riverprize. Their unique model of twinning is based on interpersonal relationships, firstly formed between the General Manager of the Council, Mike Rayner and Olita Ogonjo of the Gallamoro Net program in Nairobi and then later extended to other members of both communities. This model of twinning has the potential to be more enduring than institutionally-based twinning programs, and with wider outcomes than other more straightforward environmentally based catchment management programs.

The TKMP Stage 3 Operational Plan 2005-2010 was launched and presented by Tweed Shire Council at the 2005 Riversymposium, and itself subsequently launched YCLEAN (Youth and Community Led Environmental Action Network) in Kenya in December 2005 with The Great Nairobi River Sports for the Environment Tournament.

The visit which is the subject of this report represents the third by Australians since the commencement of the program, with Karen Craney (TSC Environmental Scientist) being first in December 2004 followed by an IRF volunteer, Dr Natalie Baker, who worked there for 2 months in February-March 2006. A fourth visit will take place in March this year by a TSC volunteer with the aim of installing a water treatment system in a village in Western Kenya.

Although there is continuing strong interest in this project by TSC, insufficient funding since its inception is currently forced a narrowing of focus to community awareness raising in the Nairobi slums. However, one proposed project is deserving of the IRF's attention; it aims to restore the Kabuthi Stream which is at the headwaters of the Nairobi River, utilizing the energy of youth groups in the slums of Nairobi.

More detail of activities, budgets and achievements to date can be found in TSC's *Tweed Community – Kenya Mentoring Program (Stage 3) Program Status and First Year Review*.

**THE VISIT**

**Goals**

The purpose of the visit was to record the problems being faced in the Nairobi River catchment and the efforts being undertaken by the youth and community groups within the Tweed Kenya Mentoring Program to address them, and to refine the current Kabuthi Stream Restoration Project Proposal as a result.

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**Visit Team**

For one month from November 24 to December 24, the following team worked in Nairobi:

- Vikki Uhlmann, former Manager of the IRF visited the project in the role of IRF Ambassador;
- Nick Leggat, Griffith University film student, photographed the project.

**Program**

Meetings, tours, interviews and filming were undertaken to promote the IRF, to gather information for a project documentary and photo exhibition, and to further refine the Project Proposal.

**DAGORETTI SLUM**

ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACTS
TKMP	Olita Ogonjo, Desk Coordinator	0722 728 692 olitac@hotmail.com
TKMP Youth and Community Led Environmental Action Network (YCLEAN)	"Ojay" Coordinator	0721 523 894
Waithaka Sports Club (Dagoretti); and TKMP Youth Coordinator	Kori Kinuthia, Coordinator	PO Box 41974 Nairobi 0721 987 558 koringirima@yahoo.com
Dagoretti Youth Club; and TKMP Talent Outreach Volunteer Officer	Peter Muturi, Chairman Stephen Chege, Contact Person	0721 554 901 stevechegz@yahoo.com
Riruta Environmental Group (RFG)	Fred Woma	Riruta Division, Dagoretti
Dagoretti Youth Sports and Environmental Group (DYSAE)		<a href="mailto:dysae@yahoo.com">dysae@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:timochi07@yahoo.com">timochi07@yahoo.com</a>
Waithaka Youth Association (WAYA)	Nicodemus Omambia Coordinator  Laban Muroki Project Manager  Moses Muturi Tae-Kwondo Coach	+254 (0) 722 249 555 <a href="mailto:nomambia@yahoo.com">nomambia@yahoo.com</a>  <a href="mailto:resspolo@yahoo.com">resspolo@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:waya_group@yahoo.com">waya_group@yahoo.com</a> 0726 094 767  0727 503 700
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	Robin Njenge	+254 (0) 724 884 721
Womens Group (Waithaka & Dagoretti)	CDF Representative	

**KIBERA SLUM**

Kibera Empowerment and Enlightenment Program (KEEP)	Moses, Secretary	
ISSA	Tobias Ochieng, Secretary Ojay, member	0720 271 455 <a href="mailto:ochidotobias@yahoo.com">ochidotobias@yahoo.com</a>
	Miss Kibera: Judith Nyaboke Mr Kibera: Bernard Otieno "Oloo",	0724 425 396 <a href="mailto:Judienyax@yahoo.com">Judienyax@yahoo.com</a> 0725 126 603 <a href="mailto:B.O@yahoo.com">B.O@yahoo.com</a>
Laini Saba Football Club	Suleiman Abubakar, Captain Saico T Muliri, Coach	PO Box 30895 Nairobi  0735 533 714
Kibera Youth Self Help Group (KYSHG)	Stephen O'Dara	

**OTHER**

Crisco Francophone (church group)	Redemptor Bwoma 6 <sup>th</sup> Fl Harambee Plaza, Nairobi	0725 686 326
Nairobi People's Settlement Association	Humphrey, Coordinator based in Kiambiu slum	0724 331 866
University of Nairobi	Muthumbi Waweru, Environmental Engineer	0720 351 214
National Environmental Management Agency (NEMA)	Wilkista Magang	0722 384 448 <a href="mailto:wobare@yahoo.com">wobare@yahoo.com</a>
Water and Sanitation Program, Worldbank	Piers Cross, Principal Regional Team Leader	+254 20 322 6314 <a href="mailto:Pcross@worldbank.org">Pcross@worldbank.org</a>

**FINDINGS**

The Kabuthi Stream is one of several which form the Nairobi River network and subsequently meet east of Nairobi to become the Athi River which flows to the coast.

The streams composing the Nairobi River are in an appalling state, with impacts from untreated household toilet waste and massive solid domestic waste dumps (plastic bags and food scraps) as well as untreated industrial discharges. It appears that very little garbage collection is undertaken by Nairobi City Council, and certainly none in the slum areas.

Although in Kenya there are nearly 33 million people living in area less than the size of New South Wales, the country has been seen as a possible example of a way forward for

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the East African States, with many international aid agencies and NGO's based there. However, it hasn't achieved as much as expected and similar to many Sub-Saharan countries, Millenium Development Goals for water and sanitation are not being achieved. Possible reasons include continued population growth outstripping efforts (2.57% compared to Australia's 0.85%), and perhaps too low a "watsan" service priority by government (WHO/UNICEF, 2004). Urban drinking water coverage in Kenya has dropped by 8% in recent years and sanitation had dropped from 48% to 46% (WHO/UNICEF, 2006); this lack of service is most visible in the urban slums.

Many people in the Nairobi River catchment live in abject poverty (less than US\$1/day). They also have a high rate of infant mortality (59 per 1000 live births compared with 4.63 for Australia) with diarrhoea, respiratory infections and malnutrition the main causes (UNICEF 2006) and poor life expectancy (49 years compared with 80.5 in Australia) (CIA, 2006).

With a significant percentage of the population suffering from HIV/AIDS, a large proportion of the surviving population is made up of youth, with the median age 18 years (CIA, 2006). Sports, particularly soccer, and cultural events are regularly used in Kenya to mobilize the youth community on important issues.

The goals of YCLEAN established within the TKMP rely on the energy of the youth living in the slums to achieve on-the-ground change for the catchment and its people.

The TKMP Desk Coordinator is currently paying small amounts from its limited funding to a number of youth group coordinators in YCLEAN to facilitate environmental improvements. Between forty and sixty youth groups in the villages of Dagoretti, Kangwari, Kiambu, Kibera, Mutoine, Riruta, Ruthmuth/ Uthilu, and Waithaka under the direction of YCLEAN as a coordinating body have been undertaking a range of initiatives. These include solid waste cleanups and lobbying council to collect rubbish, waste recycling, tree planting, youth mentoring and environmental awareness-raising about the impacts of catchment health on human health. This has included urging residents to stop using plastic bags in favour of cloth bags.

During the visit, the Kabuthi project proposal was also updated and presented to Piers Cross, the Principal Regional Team Leader for the Water and Sanitation Program in the World Bank, based in Nairobi. The meeting provided 3 important pieces of feedback on the Project Proposal:

1. The proposal is seen as comprehensive and innovative, but perhaps tries to achieve too much, with the recommendation that initiatives should be staged.
2. Attention needs to be given in the proposal to outlining the mechanisms for transparent and accountable management of project funds.
3. The Water Services Trust Fund could be approached for support.

### **OTHER RELATED INITIATIVES IN KENYA**

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Low cost ecological sanitation solutions are also needed to reduce the extent of direct untreated effluent discharge from households and industry into the Nairobi River streams. The youth groups are beginning to lobby NEMA to act on their behalf.

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) came into being in 2000 based on the new Environmental Coordination and Management Act (1999), which is similar to our own legislation in Australia. The first national conference on the environment was held in March 2006. However, while NEMA has indicated an interest in acting on the illegal discharges, in particular untreated blood from the abattoirs, it does not yet have sufficient resources to carry out its duties fully and the pollution continues.

There is also the joint UNEP/ UN-Habitat Nairobi River Basin Project which began in 1999 and the Nairobi Dam Trust Initiative, launched March 2004:

*"In recent years the run-off of waste water and solid waste, especially from the Kibera informal settlement, as well as industrial waste water discharged in the catchment, has created heavy contamination of the Dam water and resulted in uncontrolled growth of aquatic weeds." (Tibaijuka, 2004)*

While the Basin project has produced 12 thematic maps from its initial data gathering phase, the current status of these projects is unclear. An update is being awaited.

There is also a separate joint UNEP, NEMA and industry effort to ban the use of plastic bags which have become an environmental disaster, though this has not made much headway to date with resistance from some industry quarters.

It is likely that in 2007 Kenya's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper will be reviewed as required by the World Bank and the IMF every 3 years. The Kabuthi River project could provide an opportunity to input into that review so that environmental health receives a higher priority in the country's strategy, or alternatively, the Project Proposal could be reworked so that alleviating human health impacts becomes the main objective.

The GWP Kenya Water Partnership facilitated stakeholder forums on IWRM and WEP's in 2003 and may still be active in the country, though this is not obvious.

The usefulness of networking with these programs needs to be investigated.

### **VISIT OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Outcomes:**

- Strengthened the relationship between twinning partners.
- Recognised the efforts of the youth groups in the slums in restoring the Nairobi River
- Obtained feedback from the World Bank which will improve the Kabuthi River Proposal.
- Heightened interest by the University of Nairobi in assisting in the project.
- Obtained high quality visual images which can be used in project fund-raising.

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- Promoted the IRF, the Riverprize and the Symposium.

**Recommendations:**

The TKMP project has broad social and economic dimensions beyond river and catchment restoration. This project is important because it is using cost-effective community development and organizational partnerships to both clean up the Nairobi River and improve the health and poverty of the people in its catchment.

The efforts being made under YCLEAN are very impressive, given their few resources. They are perhaps achieving more on-the-ground results than the larger international programs operating on the same issues.

It is therefore recommended that the IRF:

- continue to support the TKMP;
- assist the youth groups to learn more about catchment management by linking them with more experts;
- promote the TKMP model of twinning in its communications; and
- utilize the visual images obtained from the visit to raise funds for the project.

Fundraising efforts could take the form of a marketing documentary video for use in sponsorship lunches and the Symposium, and a photo exhibition (est. min. cost of photos \$2000). Venues for the photo exhibition could include Ahimsa House, West End (budget venue), Waterfront Place Foyer (Rob Hubbards building) or the Powerhouse, where photo exhibitions on important issues have previously been displayed.

The IRF Ambassador would be willing to assist in organizing and conducting these fundraising events.