

WAKULUZU: FRIENDS OF THE COLOBUS TRUST



Conserving Coastal and Eastern Arc Forests through Community Access to Retail Markets for Good Wood Carvings on the South Coast of Kenya

Final Report to CEPF



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1.0. Introduction

The CEPF-funded project, *'Conserving Coastal and Eastern Arc Forests through Community Access to Retail Markets for Good Wood Carvings on the South Coast of Kenya'* was initiated to:

- Encourage the use of Good Woods by wood carvers in south coast Kenya
- Raise awareness about issues surrounding unsustainable use of tropical hardwoods and sustainable Good Wood options amongst all members of the industry – wood carvers, wood carving retail outlets, and consumers.
- Develop market access into hotels and kiosks for Good Wood carvings

The long term objectives of this project were to enact a shift towards use of Good Woods within the wood carving industry in south coast Kenya, thereby reducing the pressure of timber extraction from the coastal forests and forests of the Eastern Arc mountains, and ensuring the continuation of forest biodiversity for the sustainable use and enjoyment of future generations.

This report summarises activities undertaken during the project, and the achievements / successes of the project. It also outlines future activities that should be taken within this area.



2.0. Expected results and project deliverables

As outlined in the original Letter of Enquiry, the expected results and project deliverables for this project were divided into four work areas, as follows:

1. Baseline survey

Expected results

Baseline survey to quantify the sales of hard woods versus Good Woods in retail outlets in Diani. These data to be used as the baseline data for the monitoring component of the project.

Project deliverables

Baseline survey report

2. Community meetings

Expected results

Meetings with varying sectors of the communities (kiosk owners, shop keepers and wood carvers) to develop the markets from Good Woods cooperatives into the relevant establishments. The aim being to introduce stakeholders to the importance of sustainability of wood carvings within the framework of benefits for local communities – ecological, economic and cultural.

Project deliverables

At least four community meetings

3. Marketing materials

Expected results

Three types of marketing materials, to target:

1. Kiosks – to indicate to tourists that Good Woods are sold in that specific shop
2. Hotel shops – to indicate which carvings are made from Good Woods
3. Notice boards – to inform tourists to look for the project's logo and to buy Good Woods

Project deliverables

Three types of marketing materials

4. Develop market access and monitoring

Expected results

Develop links between the Good Woods cooperatives and outlets, to provide Good Woods products exclusively. Monitoring to compare the availability of Good Woods after project implementation to the base line data.

Project deliverables

Increased percentages of Good Woods to hardwoods wood carvings found in shops and kiosks

Please note: the project was initially set to end on the 31st December 2005, but was then extended to end on 30th September 2006



3.0. Activities undertaken during project

A description of all activities within this project, working to achieve the results and project deliverables outlined above, written in chronological order, now follows:

3.1. Baseline survey

The baseline survey was conducted in Diani between April and June 2005. Information was obtained through data collection and interviews. Data collection focused on four outlet types: wood carvers cooperatives (4), kiosks (15), hotel shops (11) and boutiques (7). In total, 37 outlets were surveyed. Interviews were conducted by 4 researchers with wood carvers (10), kiosk managers (25), shop keepers (15), and boutique staff (6). In total, 56 interviews were conducted with over 100 hours spent by researchers.

Significant results of the survey were as follows:

- Six tree species made up the majority of wood carvings, three Good Woods (Neem, Mango and Coconut) and three hard woods (Cape Mahogany, Ebony and Rosewood).
- On average, 36.8% of timber used in wood carvings was Good Woods, 63.2% was hard woods.
- Neem was the most commonly used Good Wood (62.4% of stock), followed by mango (35.8%) and then coconut (1.9%).
- Cape Mahogany was the most commonly used hard wood (38.6% of stock), followed by Rosewood (32.4%) and then Ebony (28.0%).
- Kiosks held the greatest levels of carving stock (62.2%), followed by wood carvers' cooperatives (22.8%), boutiques (10.2%), and finally a small amount in hotel shops (4.8%).
- Kiosks had the highest levels of Good Woods in stock (40%), followed by wood carvers' cooperatives (36.6%), boutiques (33%) and then hotel shops (29%).
- Neem and Mango were found to be the most profitable of all the woods based on the difference in cost of a log and average sale price of carvings.

Please refer to the ***Annex 1 (Base line Survey Report)*** for a more detailed description of the baseline survey. This report was originally provided to Conservation International in August 2005.

3.2. Community meetings (round 1)

Following on from the baseline survey, in August 2005 three community meetings were held with different community groups: wood carvers, kiosk owners and hotel / shop boutiques. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce relevant concepts to community members and to collectively develop an effective marketing strategy that would direct market forces towards the sale of Good Woods while having no negative financial repercussions for the industry. Meetings were held by outlet type as each group had different perspectives and concerns. A representative of the Kenya Gatsby Trust, Tome Were, attended the wood carvers meeting, to inform participants about Forest Certification.



The main outcome of the community meetings was the decision to separate the marketing strategy into two phases:

Phase 1 – pre-campaign education

Community members requested a period of time before initiation of the marketing campaign, to allow time for the following:

- Outlets to prepare for the change in tourist attitudes and also to allow managers and chairpersons time to educate their staff on appropriate sales techniques for wood carvings
- Wood carvers to prepare more good wood carvings

Community members also requested that an information booklet summarizing the outcome of the meetings be distributed to them.

Phase 2 – marketing campaign

It was decided that the marketing campaign should not start until November 2005. The marketing campaign should aim to inform tourists about the concept of Good Woods and encourage them to buy them. The campaign should include the following components:

- Poster for display in hotels, shopping centres, restaurants and at the airport, encouraging tourists to buy Good Woods.
- Supplementary poster, **only to be given to outlets with more that 75% Good Woods in stock**, to highlight them as Good Wood sellers
- Particular promotion of carvers with exhibitions in hotels to sell Good Woods
- Information on Good Woods to be given to tour representatives
- Display tables within hotels explaining the Good Woods concept
- Display table at the Colobus Trust

Please refer to the ***Annex 2 (Community Recommendations)*** for a more detailed description of the workshops and recommendations. This report was originally provided to Conservation International in August 2005.

Following on from the community meetings, and as requested at the meetings, in October 2005 an information document was sent out to all meeting participants, summarizing the outcome of the meetings and the proposed marketing campaign. Please refer to ***Annex 3 (Community Summary of Outcome of Meetings)*** for a copy of this document.

3.3. Marketing materials

After the workshops, the Trust developed a display within the Trust's visitors centre, informing visitors about the Good Woods concept and displaying Good Woods carvings for sale (produced by local wood carvers). This display remained in place throughout the duration of the project, and is still in place now.

Next, the Trust developed two types of posters: the main poster (in both German and English) for display in hotels, asking tourists only to buy wood carvings from outlets with a Good Woods sign; the supplementary poster for retail outlets and hotels stocking more than 75% Good Wood stock, to advertise them as a Good Woods outlet. These posters took longer than expected to design and print, and project activity was also interrupted because of change of management at the Colobus Trust. The posters were finally produced in May 2006. Please refer to ***Annex 4 (Main Poster English)***, ***Annex 5 (Main Poster German)***, and ***Annex 6 (Supplementary Poster)*** for copies of these posters.



3.4 Developing marketing access and monitoring

In June / July 2006 the Trust conducted a resurvey of retail outlets (that had originally been baseline surveyed in August 2005) to determine which ones had achieved a 75% plus Good Woods stock level, the aim being that these outlets would then get a poster promoting them as a Good Wood outlet.

The survey revealed that only one out of the 37 outlets has achieved a 75% or greater Good Wood stock level by number of carvings, although 13 of them have achieved a 50% or greater level. The average level of Good Wood carvings in stock by cubic metre has gone from 46% to 62%. There has been a move in the right direction, however not as great as hoped for. Please refer to the **Annex 7 (Re-Survey Report)** for a more detailed description of the resurvey.

3.5 Community meetings (round 2)

During the course of the survey, many of the wood carvers and sellers expressed concern to the surveyor about the Good Woods concept. These concerns fell into three main categories:

- 1) Misunderstanding about the Good Woods concept and the aims of the project
e.g. *“We think that you are trying to put wood carvers out of business”*
“Why are you targeting wood carvers, when there are other groups that cause greater damage to the forest, such as charcoal producers”.
- 2) Concerns about how to increase good wood stock levels
e.g. *“We haven’t been told where to get good wood timber from”*
“We haven’t been shown the particular techniques for treating and carving good woods”
- 3) Desire to stick to traditional woods and carving methods
e.g. *“We find hard wood easier to carve than good wood”*
“High quality carvings can only be produced from hard woods”

These were all concerns that had been addressed at the original workshops in August 2005, so it was disappointing that they were still creating stumbling blocks for the community.

It was decided that it was essential to hold further workshops, to talk through people’s concerns and to try and develop a positive way forward. Two workshops were held at the end of the July 2006, and representatives from every group that had been invited to the original workshops were invited to attend.

There was a large turn-out for each of the workshops, which were also attended by representatives from the Coastal Forest Conservation Unit (CFCU) (Abdhul Rahaman Matano, Acting Project Officer and Hamisi Juma Mududu, Field Office) and WWF (Elias Kimaru, Project Executant, WWF Kwale District Forest Landscape Restoration Project).

Each workshop followed a similar format, with a briefing on the aims and progress of the Good Woods project being given, followed by a question and answer session, to give everyone an opportunity to express themselves.



The workshops cleared up the misunderstandings about the project, and revealed a clear way forward for future activities:

- All future activities in the Good Wood project should be guided by a committee made up of representatives from the carving community, the Colobus Trust, CFCU and WWF. The committee should ensure that the shift to Good Woods is driven forward, and that the attitude towards this shift remains positive.
- There must be a focus on putting carvers and sellers in touch with Good Woods producers, and with carving cooperatives that are already successfully producing high quality Good Woods carvings.
- There was very strong feeling that the posters could not be distributed to hotels and retail outlets yet, as outlets do not have high enough Good Woods stocks to cope with the potential demand, and cannot increase their levels of Good Wood carvings until they have stronger links with Good Wood farmers. Outlets will continue to work to increase Good Woods stocks, and agree that the posters must go out as soon as possible. The Good Woods committee will monitor progress and help with distribution of posters at the appropriate time.

Given the outcome of the workshops, for the remaining duration of the project it was strongly felt that the focus of work should shift away from marketing and promoting Good Woods, to supporting carvers and retail outlets to increase their Good Woods stock levels, through:

- A fact-finding trip for Good Woods committee members to Akamba wood carvers cooperative in Mombasa (a successful Good Woods cooperative), a group of certified Good Woods farmers in the nearby area of Waa, and carving processing facilities in the nearby town of Ukunda. Facts from the trip to be disseminated by committee members to the wider carving community.
- Production / distribution of list of local certified farmers with stocks of Good Woods timber.

3.6 Good Woods committee

The Good Woods committee was established in early August 2006, including 9 members of the wood carving community, a WWF representative (Elias Kimaru, also representing the Kenya Gatsby Trust), and the Colobus Trust acting as secretariat. The first committee meeting was held at the start of September 2006, when arrangements were made for the fact-finding trip.

3.7 Fact-finding trip and links with local Good Woods certified farmers

The fact-finding trip took place in September 2006 and was attended by the Colobus Trust, CFCU (Hamisi Juma Mududu, Field Office) and 8 of the 9 Good Wood committee members.

The group first visited Akamba wood carvers co-operative in Mombasa. This is a well-established cooperative that acts as a marketing agent for certified farmers and carvers. The cooperative has a log yard, kiln, tree nursery and shop. Despite its success, at the time of the visit the cooperative was dealing with conflict between certified farmers and carvers over the price of timber, and no certified timber was available. This dispute was being mediated Alex Kubi, Certification Officer of the Kenya Gatsby Trust. Alex Kubi stated that he could provide the group with a list of certified farmers for Kwale district, together with their contact details.

Next the group visited a group of certified Neem farmers based in Waa, near Diani. Mwaronga Bambaulo, committee member of the Coastal Farm Forestry Association (CFFA) and Chairman of the Mkurubani Neem Group, lead the visit. A link was established between the Diani carvers and the farmers. Carvers were told to contact the CFFA area resource manager to order timber. Finally the group visited Ukunda Youth Polytechnic, which houses a kiln for drying wood carvings, which can be used for a small fee.



4.0. Evaluation of achievements / successes

An evaluation of achievements / successes within each of the four work areas is now given:

1. Baseline survey

Results

The original aim was to conduct a survey of wood carving retail outlets, to establish baseline data to be used to monitor the level of success in achieving the project's objectives. This was conducted successfully between April and June 2005,.

Project deliverables

Baseline survey report (**Annex 1**) ACHIEVED

2. Community meetings

Results

The original target was to hold meetings with various sectors of the wood carving community, to introduce stakeholders to the importance of using sustainable wood sources, and to create links between different groups. Altogether, five community meetings were held, three at the start of the project and two towards the end. In addition, an active Good Woods committee was created, with members drawn from different local wood carving community groups, the Colobus Trust and WWF. Finally, members of the community were put in contact with other carving groups in Mombasa and Kwale District.

Project deliverables

At least four community meetings ACHIEVED – five meetings plus active Good Woods committee and fact-finding trip

3. Marketing materials

Results

The original aim was to develop three types of marketing materials, for kiosks, hotel shops and tourist notice boards. After the first round of community meetings, it was decided to wait to introduce the marketing campaign until enough Good Wood carvings were in stock in outlets, and outlet staff were prepared for the change in tourist buying trends. It was also decided to produce two types of poster, one to inform tourists, and one for display in retail outlets stocking high levels of Good Wood carvings. These posters were produced but up to now have not been distributed, at the request of wood carving community members (as discussed at the second round of workshops). They will be held by the Colobus Trust until outlets have built up their stocks of Good Wood carvings to higher levels (75% plus), and the Good Woods committee will monitor progress on this. Despite this, a Good Woods display was developed at the Trust's visitors centre, which includes information about the Good Woods concept and offers a retail outlet for Good Wood carvers.

Project deliverables

Three types of marketing materials ACHIEVED – two posters produced although not yet distributed (at request of carving community), Good Woods display at Colobus Trust visitors centre.



4. Develop market access and monitoring

Results

The original target was to develop links between producers and sellers of Good Wood products, and to monitor changes in availability of Food Wood products after project implementation. Through use of workshops and the Good Woods committee, links were established between producers and sellers. The resurvey of retail outlets in June/July 2006 allowed monitoring of progress on the project's objectives. It revealed a shift towards production / selling of Good Wood carvings as opposed to hard wood carvings, but of a smaller scale than had been hoped for at the start of the project.

Project deliverables

Increased percentages of Good Woods to hardwoods wood carvings found in shops and kiosks
ACHIEVED – on a small scale – activities conducted within the project revealed the huge nature of the task of changing traditional use practices and perceptions of the wood carving community.



4.0. Conclusion and future work

This project was a success in that it achieved what it set out to. However it also revealed that the process of encouraging a significant and permanent shift in practice from the use of hard woods to Good Woods involves a long-term commitment. The project initially expected to focus on the consumer end of the industry, educating retail outlets and tourists as to the importance of selling and buying Good Wood carvings. During the project it became apparent that this cannot be undertaken until there is a well established network of certified Good Wood farmers with strong links to wood carving cooperatives and individuals, and agreement between these groups on timber prices, so that access to Good Wood timber is easy. There is still a long way to go to achieve this. It seems that the initial time frame, expenditure and required effort set out for this project was under estimated. Therefore it is essential that funding is sourced to continue this project into the future, to achieve the following:

Continuation of activities started under current project:

1. Continue to develop links between Good Woods farmers and carvers
2. Distribute posters once 75% plus Good Woods stock levels have been achieved to increase tourist awareness
3. Give marketing support to outlets with 75% plus Good Woods stock levels
4. Market the Good Woods concept, particularly in hotels and to tour operators

New activities (working in conjunction with partner organisations, including CFCU, WWF and the Kenya Gatsby Trust):

1. Increase the number of farmers in Kwale district involved in growing of certified Good Woods trees. So far there are only about 80 farmers in Kwale participating.
2. Carry out a resource survey of senile coconut trees in the district, harvestable for use as timber and wood for carving.
3. Get coconut wood certified as a Good Wood.
4. Help design and build simpler kilns that can be produced locally.
5. Work with Ukunda Youth Polytechnic to promote the use of coconut wood amongst the communities in Kwale.
6. Ensure a presence at trade and craft exhibitions, and financial support to facilitate more farmers and carvers from Kwale to participate.
7. Develop a Good Woods newsletter, published periodically to disseminate information on Good Woods in Kiswahili, owned and contributed to by Kwale farmers and carvers.
8. Design a recognition / reward scheme for outlets achieving 75% plus Good Woods stock levels.