

Project Update: January 2014

INTRODUCTION

Lake Victoria Tour Guides Association (LVTOGA) with the 3rd support from the Rufford Small Grants in implementing a twelve months project entitled; ***enabling local best practices for the Restoration and Conservation of Kusa and Koguta wetlands in Kenya***. The project entails establishment of a wetland resource centre for showcase of best practices for wetland conservation, environmental education through experiential learning and capacity building trainings of wetland user groups.

Project Activities carried out

- a) Community consultative meetings.
- b) Construction of the Wetland Resource Centre
- c) Environmental Education

Community Consultative meetings

Various consultative meetings were carried out with Site Conservation Group members of Kusa and Koguta villages with the main aim of discussing and agreeing on the project's intended activities in terms of appropriate space for the Resource Centre, conservation best practices to be implemented in the resource centre including value added wetland crafts, ecotourism services, environmental education and green energy technologies.



Photo 1: LVTOGA volunteers facilitate a meeting with the papyrus harvesters

Construction of the Wetland Resource Centre

The space for the construction of the resource centre was donated by the Kusa wetland community. Moreover, the site conservation group members and other members of the community from various user groups also has been providing in kind contributions through labour, mobilising and transporting of building materials, providing meals for the artisans, among others.



Photo 2: Community members participate in the construction process.



Photo 3: The inside view of the resource centre being furnished with wetland products.

Emerging Issues

- The Kusa and Koguta Site Conservation groups and the community have been very receptive and grateful about the establishment of the resource and the planned activities.
- A number of schools have begun visiting Kusa beach area for educational services.
- LVTOGA team was glad to have participated in the East African regional conference for the Rufford grantees which presented a good platform for information sharing and networking.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The construction of the wetland resource centre is still ongoing whilst on its final stages. The centre will then be populated with various best practices including green energy technologies, ecotourism services such as tour guiding, environmental education services and gift shop with wetland products.
2. We expect that the project implementation will be completed by March 2014. It is envisaged that the centre activities will be continuing and generate income for sustainability.