



Tanzania

Communication, Communities, and Conservation

Since gaining independence from Britain in 1961, Tanzania has made a concerted effort to protect its abundant natural resources. At the same time, the country's 500-mile coastline and numerous national parks, conservation areas, and game reserves are critical to its economic development. Tanzania's ongoing challenge, therefore, is to create new economic opportunities that are also environmentally sustainable.

In 2001, USAID/Tanzania invited GreenCOM to implement a multi-year project to bring together communities, schools, government agencies, and NGOs in environmental communication and social mobilization activities. These activities focused on helping people who live in resource-rich areas understand how sustainable resource management can improve the quality of their lives.



Assessing Community Perceptions

From the beginning, GreenCOM collaborated with a number of partners at the local and national levels who were also working to implement the USAID Strategic Objective "Improved Natural Resources and Wildlife Management in Pilot Areas." Project activities were designed with the goal of supporting and/or enhancing existing initiatives in natural resource management.

GreenCOM researchers also conducted an initial survey to gauge knowledge, attitudes, and practices of key audiences in the target communities. These surveys helped to identify the environmental issues

that most concerned communities, including decreases in fish catch, coastal erosion, and land degradation around parks and conservation areas. Results indicated a strong willingness on the part of students to participate in conservation activities if given proper guidance. In addition, a high percentage of respondents felt that custody of protected areas should be given to local communities.

The formative research enabled project staff to design a program that met the specific needs of the target communities and supported partners' activities.

Involving Communities in Integrated Coastal Management

One of GreenCOM's first tasks was to provide communications support to the country's emerging integrated coastal management strategy. The strategy was developed by the Tanzania Coastal Management Partnership (TCMP), a joint initiative of Tanzania's National Environment Management Council, USAID, and the University of Rhode Island's Coastal Resources Center.

GreenCOM's role was to increase participation in the formation of this strategy by starting a dialogue on coastal issues. This conversation involved a wide variety of stakeholders including community

leaders, fisherfolk, housewives, boat makers, teachers, and children. They discussed their use of coastal resources and shared their views of the problems, challenges, and opportunities coastal communities faced. GreenCOM documented their input in a video called *Voices from the Coast*, which was presented by TCMP to the technical committees that were developing the integrated coastal management strategy and to members of parliament. *Voices from the Coast* was instrumental in conveying community perspectives on coastal issues to national policymakers.

Community Environmental Awards

Another way that GreenCOM helped pave the way for the new integrated coastal management strategy was through a community action incentive also used by GreenCOM in The Gambia and Egypt. In Tanzania the program was officially called the Community Environmental Awards Scheme (CEAS).

Implemented first in communities along the coast, CEAS proved to be a tremendously popular instrument for increasing public awareness of environmental issues and generating citizen participation in environmental management and protection. The program is implemented at the municipal district level by committees composed of individuals from a variety of sectors. GreenCOM trained committee members to run the awards program and built their capacity to sustain it in the future. By 2003, CEAS was operating in 20 districts on the coast and near Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Parks and the Ugalla Game Reserve. More than 200,000 people were participating in one way or another.

CEAS invites participation from voluntary groups, individuals, schools, and other organizations in a particular community area to enter projects that help improve natural resource management at the community level. The projects are judged by the local CEAS committee according to a set of predetermined guidelines. All entrants receive certificates of participation, and outstanding projects receive awards at district prize ceremonies that are often attended by high-ranking government officials and private sector leaders in addition to hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of community members. Some examples of CEAS projects include:

1. Mangrove Restoration

In one district south of Dar es Salaam, a village faced coastal erosion because protective mangroves along its shorelines had been cut down. A group of women proposed a project to replant the mangroves to stop erosion and reestablish the natural fish nurseries they provide.

2. Seaweed Farming

Several women's groups in coastal districts found that seaweed farming was an environmentally sound way to earn income. CEAS rewarded their efforts with prizes of plastic ropes and other equipment that they used to expand their farms.

3. Conservation Clubs

A secondary school student in Tabora participated in one of GreenCOM's conservation club workshops and then took part in CEAS by organizing several new conservation clubs in area schools. One of the clubs became a finalist for the Volvo Adventure Environmental Award, which gives young people a chance to present their grassroots environmental activities to the United Nations Environment Program.

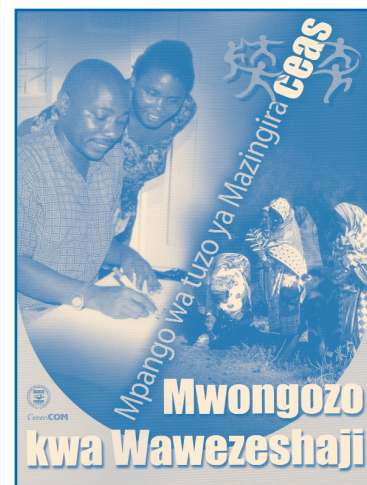
4. Tree Nurseries

One of the most popular activities for schools that participate in CEAS is the establishment of tree nurseries. Students collect seeds from local trees and plant them in seedbeds that are made and maintained on school grounds. The seedlings are later sold or given to parents of the schoolchildren to plant around their own homes or fields.

In addition to the benefits that these projects bring to communities, CEAS also serves as a powerful tool for uniting community members and

government officials in the pursuit of common goals for natural resource management. For example, a presentation on coral mining made at a CEAS awards ceremony prompted a district commissioner to call a meeting of his council that ultimately resulted in a ban on coral mining in that district.

In 2003, GreenCOM published a guide to implementing a community environmental awards scheme. The guide, which was pretested with district CEAS committees, was written to help both participating and potentially interested districts maintain or start their own program.



GreenCOM's guide to implementing community award programs

(Available to download from <http://www.greencom.org>)

Environmental Education

In addition to the environmental awards program, GreenCOM also made significant contributions to environmental education in Tanzania. The project offered a series of train-the-trainer workshops for teachers and leaders of conservation clubs such as Roots and Shoots (organized by the Jane Goodall

Institute) and Malihai (founded by the Tanzanian government, international funding agencies, and NGOs). The workshops were designed to give participants fresh ideas about introducing environmental education in their schools, clubs, and communities.

In conjunction with the teacher and club leader workshops, GreenCOM published three books—*Teacher’s Environmental Education Handbook*, *Encounters with Wildlife*, and *Caring for Our Wildlife*—and a poster on animals found in Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Parks. All of these materials were printed in Kiswahili and English and reflect the input of teachers, government officials, and other key stakeholders.

GreenCOM also helped to build the communication skills of national park and protected area personnel. The project collaborated with Tanzania National Parks staff to train this group in basic communication theory and practice with a goal of improving visitor and community outreach. In a 2003 workshop, park and protected area officials drafted communication strategies for Lake Manyara, Tarangire, and Serengeti National Parks and for the Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

Lessons and Results

GreenCOM’s program in Tanzania demonstrates the value of combining widespread participation with the strategic application of communication and education interventions for large-scale results. The range of stakeholders who became involved with GreenCOM activities is impressive—national and local government officials, national park staff, park and game wardens, extension officers, journalists, educators, school-age youth, conservation clubs, NGOs, private sector entities, communities, and community leaders.

Perhaps more important than numbers is the increased capacity for environmental stewardship that these stakeholders gained. Through projects they entered in community environmental awards programs, thousands of citizens learned new skills that have improved their livelihoods and bettered their communities while helping to protect their natural resources.

Selected Publications and Products

Allen, Irma. *Teacher’s Environmental Education Handbook* (also in Kiswahili: *Elimu ya mazingira kwa walimu.*) Dar es Salaam: Academy for Educational Development (AED), 2000.

Allen, Irma, Anna Kashaija, Mark Amaral, and Gratian Luhikula. *Coastal Environment Award Scheme: Enhancing Motivation to Manage Coastal Resources.* Dar es Salaam: AED, 1999.

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Allen, Irma, Florence Swai, and Pancras Ngalason. *Encounters with Wildlife* (also in Kiswahili: *Maisha na wanyamapori.*) Dar es Salaam: AED, 2000.

GreenCOM Project. *Mpango wa tuzo ya mazingira CEAS mchakato wa uhamasishaji wa kijamii: Mwongozo kwa wawezeshaji (The Environmental Awards Scheme, a Social Mobilization Process: Manual for Facilitators).* Dar es Salaam: AED, 2003.



GreenCOM

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