

PROJECT REPORT

Name of Project	Improving capacity of bird watching guides in sustainable eco-tourism in Sierra Leone		
Project Period Start Date	June, 2017	Project Period End Date	November, 2017
Budget Amount	€ 5,000.00		
Project Donor	Wadden Sea Secretariat		
Project Implementers	National Association of Certified Tour Guides (NACTOG)		
Funding Agency	Wadden Sea Secretariat		

OVERVIEW

The National Association of Certified tourist guide [NACTOG SL] solicited funding from the Wadden Sea Secretariat to start up bird watching activities along the marine coastal areas to increase interest among the number of people that are engaged in wildlife watching tourism, so that community participation will be enhanced and create awareness to protect their habitat. Creating a sustainable ecotourism activities for our local communities that stay along the East Atlantic Flyways livelihood and increase their knowledge and skills in species monitoring, identification and guiding. The project will also take ecotourism to the schools by introducing nature clubs and embark on field trips to inspire and expose these students wildlife watching opportunities.

END OF PROJECT REPORT

1. Schedule Birdwatching Excursions to IBA
2. Conduct Weekend trips to ecotourism sites in the Western Area Peninsula and Wetland Coastal areas
3. Production of Signage for Aberdeen Creek
4. Formation of nature clubs in schools and Tertiary institutions
5. Conduct Field trips of Nature clubs to tourist sites
6. Community Sensitization
 - Tisana (Yawribay) in the Western Area Rural
 - Shenge in the Southern Province)
7. Community ownership

PERFORMANCE

The overall performance of the project is very encouraging as it has built some capacity in birdwatching communities and restore the sense of ownership to these communities.

The financial piece is narrated below.

No	Target/Tolerance	Budgeted Amount	Actual Expenditures	Details
01	Ecotourism activities	€ 250	€ 250	No surplus amount was required for this activity
02	Advertising / promotion	€ 935.88	€ 1,050	Unbudgeted expenses arise
03	Create Awareness (Establish Nature Clubs)	€ 1,181.63	€ 1,325	Increase budget due to increase number of participants from each Nature club
04	Community sensitization	€ 583.04	€ 583.04	Funding adequate for the scope of this activity
05	Travel for Site Guides / Bird Rangers Training, Tissana	€ 722.90	€ 600.00	Funding adequate for the scope of this activity
06	Supplies	€ 236.92	€ 236.92	Funding adequate for the scope of this activity
07	Equipment	€ 1,094.60	€ 1,094.60	Funding adequate for the scope of this activity

There was a deficit of € 140.00 from the budgeted amount, which was used to support advertising / promotion and establishment of nature clubs. There is redirection of funds from travel of site guides and Bird Rangers to support the establishment of nature clubs.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- Standing site guides in the various communities
- Creating livelihood for selected members of the community
- Increase interest in tourism activities
- Instilling community ownership
 - There is a committee set up responsible for Bird watching in the community
 - There is an entrance fees payable to the communities
- Community participation in protection of the sites

CHALLENGES

- Limited number of participants for the various training programs
- Limited funding to undertake prolonged training with increase number of participant
- The sample size for the pilot of the formation of nature clubs is too small
- No resources for monitoring and evaluation to ensure sustainability
- Limited number of schools involved in the formation of the nature clubs
- No routine follow up activities to arose interest of other students and ensure sustainability

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

- Visitation to various nature clubs in schools to monitor their progress
- Quarterly meetings of Nature clubs
- Visitation to the various sites (Tissana and Shenge) to ensure that the structures are in place and are working
- Refresher training and evaluation on the progress of training
- Roles of Local authorities to ensure the structures are supported

1.1 Open project Issues

Issue ID:	Issue summary	Proposed action	Reason
01	Delay in implementations	Send application for funding earlier	Delay in receipt of funds from Donor
02	Exchange Loss	Transfer immediately as budget is approved or make provisions for fluctuating exchange rate	The budgeted amount is not enough as a result of exchange loss
03	Political issues	Further engagement with NTB & EPA	Difficulty to erect the signage at the Ramsar Site
04	Seasonality	Enough resources should be allocated to meet with the logistics challenges that falls with seasonal effect	During the rainy season, cost to travel to certain locations increase because of various reasons
05	Inadequate support for Tour Guides	Budget some amount for admin support	Inadequate per diem for tutors and participants
06	Limited equipment	Purchase of start - up kits for Bird watching communities	To provide the community structures with basic equipment to carry out tours

1.2 Potential Risk

Risk ID:	Risk summary	Proposed action	Reason
01	Increased cost of project	Faster transfer	To avoid exchange loss
02	Sustainability the nature club	Organize more site trips to give opportunity to other students	Only few students from each school or tertiary institution's nature club were selected
03	Sustainability of the nature guides and rangers in the communities	Continuous engagement with community stakeholders and refresher trainings for participants	To strengthen the sense of ownership in the community and in knowledge transfer

PROJECT SUMMARY

Sierra Leone is endowed with wetlands and the inhabitants of these wetlands in most cases are migratory birds but the protection of their environment is not guaranteed because of several threats that loom over them. Therefore, this project identifies some of the endangered communities and pilots the initiative to set up a bird watching structure and training the custodians of the said structure such as the local bird guide and rangers. In addition, nature clubs were also formed in schools and tertiary institutions.

Expectations

- Develop structure for bird watching in communities
- Know the techniques involved in identifying birds
- Know the importance of Migratory birds
- Build the capacity of locals / villagers on bird monitoring techniques
- Pilot the Formation of nature clubs in schools

LAUNCH OF NATURE CLUBS

The National Association of Certified Tourist Guides, on the 11th November 2017, launched the Nature Clubs. The Nature Club comprises of two tertiary institutions, one secondary school and one primary school. The launching took place at the Monument and Relics at Cotton Tree, the program started with open prayers by both Muslim and Christian. After the chairman's remarks, the purpose of the launching of the Nature Club by the Organization and the Director of the National Tourist Board explained to the students the importance of the migratory birds coming to Sierra Leone and their flyways. On the launching of the Nature Clubs, the Director issued one poster and one field guide to each of the schools.



Director of Tourism & Cultural Affairs

After the luncheon ceremony the field officer trainer, talked to the student the important of the Migratory birds to the east Atlantic flyway coming to our country Sierra Leone. The aim and objective of NACTOG for forming the Nature clubs is for student to know how to identify birds, protection of their flyways and encourage them on ecotourism activities. After 30 Minute lecture about migratory birds and the methodology of bird watching.



Primary School Children

TRIP REPORT FOR NATURE CLUBS SITE VISIT

We went to a field visited two sites the Aberdeen Creek Ramsar Site and Tissana wetland Yawribay to identify water birds roost along this wetlands. The students were thought how to use the field guide, binocular and telescope.



Learning the use of a telescope



Using Binoculars



Lunch Time during the Site Visit of Nature Clubs

The following water birds species that the student were able to identify when birding on the aforementioned sites.

No:	Common Names	Numbers of Species Identify
01	Whimbrel	5
02	Western Reef Heron	6
03	Little Egret	10
04	Sacred Ibis	5
05	Intermediate Egret	2
06	Sandwich Tern	2
07	Common Ring Plover	2
08	Bar-Tailed Godwith	1
09	Gray Plover	1
10	Green backed Heron	2
11	Common Sandpiper	4
12	Common Green Shank	1

TRIP REPORT FOR SENSITATION IN WETLAND COMMUNITIES

CROSS CUTTING LECTURES

Important of Birds

Birds can serve as indicators of a healthy environment. The presence of waders, raptors, insectivorous and seed eaters (different species of birds) in the same ecosystem shows how much life forms that ecosystem can support, therefore how healthy, that ecosystem is.

Identifying water birds

Water birds are usually found in and around water bodies and include waders. Such waterbodies can be marine or fresh. They exhibit certain behavioural characteristics like diving as in cormorants and darters, swimming like ducks and geese, wading like greenshanks and herons and chasing receding waves like stints.

Counting water birds

People may ask, why count birds? It is important to monitor change in number of birds over a period of time. For example, an increase in species numbers might mean the population is doing great and living conditions for that species is good. A decrease in population might be related to habitat destruction or disease or probably the area where the birds breed has been converted into a farm. Counting birds has resulted in valuable research that has saved species from extinction.

How to use and care for bins

A pair of Binoculars also known as bins, are very important key equipment used in the study and observation of birds. It facilitates detailed view of bird species thereby enabling factual observation.

It comprises of a couple of prismatic lenses that refract and enlarge the image of the object observed.

Basic care includes cleaning the objective and eye piece lenses before and after use. Keeping the equipment dry as much as possible. Reducing impacts and shocks as this may cause prisms to shift thereby altering image. Some recent models are weather proof to some extent, coated with rubber to make it water resistant.

Monitoring water birds

Monitoring is a conservation tool used to evaluate the population, distribution and therefore how healthy water bird species level remain over time.

Monitoring techniques include bird counts which can be annual or biannual. The information acquired from such exercises tells you how widely or sparsely distributed species of birds are over a period of time. Thus prompting proper research, especially in particular water birds species are in decline.

How to satisfy your birdwatcher

Sometimes, while waiting for a particular species to appear the guide can engage the tourist in fables, folklore or sacred and other interesting events. Cattle egrets are regarded as cow angels because people think they guide cattle, not actually realizing that they feed on insects that are flushed when the cattle are on the move. The guide must always realize that, the essence of the tour is to get the tourist to come back to him in the future, and not to discourage to tourist.

TISSANA TRAINING

Village or local guides were exposed to the actual practical aspects of observing and identifying water bird species in their habitats as the tide was receding. Species identified can be found at the end of the report.

No:	English Name	Scientific Name
01	Long-tailed Cormorant	Microcarbo africanus
02	Black heron	Egretta ardesiaca
03	Western Reef egret	Egretta gularis
04	Green-backed heron	Burtoides striata
05	Little Egret	Egretta garzetta
06	Great egret	Ardea alba
07	Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea
08	Pink-backed Pelican	Pelicanus rufescens
09	African Sacred ibis	Threskiornis aethiopicus
10	Common Green shank	Tringa nebularia
11	Common Red shank	Tringa tetanus
12	Grey plover	Pluvialis squatarola
13	Wooly-necked stork	Cicornia episcopus
14	African Spoonbill	Platalea leucorodia
15	White-headed lapwing	Vanellus albiceps
16	Whimbrel	Numenius phaeopus
17	Common sandpiper	Actitis hypoleucos

SHENGE TRAINING

The Training was took place at Shenge Town the southern part of our country Sierra Leone coordinate N: 0756253 W: 01232345 Elevation 125m, on the 30th September to the 1st October 2017. I was accompany by David Monticello who is working for the UNDP and Photographic birder who claim to be the first Tourist to visit Kargboro Creeks Migratory site on the training. The training started with Stakeholders meeting with the elders to introduce the project, we start with prayer and welcome address was comment by the paramount chief representative. Introduction of all Participant that attended the stakeholders comprises of following communities Shenge, Kata, Tissana Point, Plantain Island and Turtle Island.



Meeting with the community - Shenge



End of Training in Shenge

The purpose of the meeting was elaborated by the National Association of Certified Tourist Guide Trainer officer Momoh Bai Sesay. That our project Status is to improving capacity of Bird Watching Guides in Sustainable eco-tourism in Sierra Leone. And we want the following community to cooperate with us to have a sustainable tourism programme in their communities,

for them to have benefit from tourism activities. I further said Nactog need ten participant even though they will have the same training as bird watcher but they will split in to two groups five as bird watchers and five as bird rangers. And I strictly emphasize their duties each group will perform related to the sustainability ecotourism. The selection of the training Mr. Charles Barley, announced names of Birdwatchers and Bird Rangers equivalent to ten people below are the list of participants.

No:	Names
	Bird Watchers
01	Amololie Kogba
02	Gibril E. Simbo
03	John Barley
04	Mohamed J. Conteh
05	Sylvester Caulker
	Rangers
01	Amadu Bah Kallah
02	Max Campbell
03	Harry Tucker
04	Charles M. Barley
05	Mohamed Conteh

Participant Comments on the stockholders meeting, the Paramount chief representative Mr. Tennyson Caulker thanks the National Association of Certified Tourist Guides for the interest they have for their chieftom. He advice the training to pay attention on the training and take it serious because is a very important programme that will bring development in the region. Mr. Thomas Caulker the principal of the secondary school in the community, also said he too was happy for the training and it a step for tourism development. He also advice the training to take the training very serious as he can remember he wrote his thesis on tourism how Shenge should develop on tourism and he has the document. So if Nactog, came with such ideas he was the one to supports the ideas and make sure it has sustainability. Concern raises form the communities was for boats for monitory, including girls on the training and also cultural dance programmes. The vote of thanks was said by the paramount chief representative Mr. Tennyson Caulker, on the stakeholders meeting and refreshment before we started the training.

Training Method:



Shenge Training



Shenge Training

The training started with the Conservation of water birds and wetlands in the coastal areas, and the important of the Wadden Sea and ecotourism, bird's identification, point count and monitory. Topography of the bird and introduced them how to use the field guide, binoculars and Telescope. We concluded the training on customary care lectures and their duties when having client. Below are the species spotted by the training?

No:	English Name	Numbers
01	Bar-Tailed Godwith	3
02	Pink backed Pelican	3
03	Western Reef Heron	2
04	Whimbrel	5
05	Eurasian Curlew	200
06	Pied Avocet	40
07	Little Ring plover	30
08	Grey Plover	10
09	Marsh Curlew Sandpiper	1
10	African Fish Eagle	1
11	Royal Tern	2
12	Sandwich Tern	10

13	Gull bill Tern	5
14	Palm-Nut Vulture	2
15	Hooded Vulture	7
16	Common Sandpiper	2
17	Eurasian Oystercatcher	25

Recommendations and Conclusion

The training went well the participant were grateful for the training and express interest on the training. On the field practical, the groups were divided into two (2). Group A - the bird watchers went on boat to the Kargboro Creek and Group B the bird Rangers bird at Shenge bull mudflat area.

In conclusion of the training the participant plead that they need continuous training and they want the organization to help them for Binoculars and Telescopes. On the practical session, we gave them two field guide which will help them to identify birds.

Overall, the project was a success as local guides and rangers in the coastal communities piloted has increased the interest of bird watching amongst the community residents as some of them has become conversant with identifying migratory bird species.

More enrollment have been done in the various nature clubs in all the piloted schools and tertiary institutions

Recommendations

It was recommended that it will be appreciated if more funds are made available to train more local guides and bird rangers in all the coastal communities with huge potentials for migratory birds.

