



Global Connections' Relief and Development Forum

'Do No Harm'

October 2006

CASE STUDY – ASSETS, KENYA

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ASSETS (the Arabuko-Sokoke Schools and Eco-Tourism Scheme) is a community bursary scheme which combines the need to protect the biodiversity of the forest and surrounding areas with the need of the local community to advance their children's secondary education. The A-S Forest is one of six Important Biodiversity Areas near Malindi at the Kenya coast with a rich diversity of species surviving in habitats that are increasingly under pressure and shrinking due to a growing human population and the desire to exploit natural resources for cash to pay for school fees and other needs. Where the forest has been cleared, the fertility of the tropical coastal soils rapidly deteriorates and they are prone to erosion. Only 1 in 10 of those who qualify for secondary education (about one third of those leaving primary school) actually take up their places because their families cannot afford the fees – around £300 per year.

A Rocha Kenya (ARK) conceived ASSETS in 2001 in response to these issues. The scheme is integrated with ARK's research and monitoring of threatened habitats and species and their environmental education programmes; the scheme is funded by grants and donations from tourists and others who visit the beautiful natural sites of the area. ARK works closely with government agencies and other NGOs. So far, around 160 young people from 5 primary schools have benefited from bursaries, which provide up to two thirds of the fees. ARK staff visit homes, assess the families' needs and follow the beneficiaries' progress through school. During the holidays beneficiaries are required to attend courses on local ecology and conservation methods, e.g. tree-planting, fuel-efficient cooking stoves, sustainable fishing methods, agro-forestry – and encouraged to put what they learn into practice at their homes. Next year ARK expects to launch a Climate Stewards project to assist further in implementing the relevant parts of this programme.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What insights does the presentation offer to the working out of God's covenant revealed in passages like Genesis 9:8-17, Hosea 4:1-6 and Micah 6:8?

2. What overlaps and links can you see between Relief & Development and 'creation care'? What issues do we need to consider in order to ensure that R&D programmes do not result in degradation of the natural environment?

Genesis 9:8-17

8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: 9 "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you 10 and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. 11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."

12 And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: 13 I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. 16 Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth."

17 So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."

Hosea 4:1-6

1 Hear the word of the LORD, you Israelites, because the LORD has a charge to bring against you who live in the land:

"There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land.

2 There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.

3 Because of this the land dries up, and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field, the birds in the sky and the fish in the sea are swept away.

4 "But let no one bring a charge, let no one accuse another, for your people are like those who bring charges against a priest.

5 You stumble day and night, and the prophets stumble with you. So I will destroy your mother—

6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.

"Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

Micah 6: He has shown all you people what is good.

And what does the LORD require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

and to walk humbly with your God.