

PROVIDING A HAND UP, NOT A HAND OUT

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FISH FOR TOMORROW PROJECT IN NKHOTAKOTA DISTRICT END OF YEAR ONE INTERIM REPORT APRIL 2018

Overview

Donor Name: Foundation Eagle
Project Name: RIPPLE Africa Fish For Tomorrow in Lake Malawi – rapid extension of project into Chia Lagoon and surrounding area, Nkhotakota District
Grant Size: £41,183
Grant Period: April 2017 to April 2019

Project Overview

Fish for Tomorrow is a community based fisheries protection system in northern Malawi. The Participatory Fisheries Management (PFM) Programme, introduced in Malawi in 1993, has not effectively protected the Chambo Fish which is now on the IUCN Red List of Endangered Species. RIPPLE Africa's project was started in an attempt to introduce a completely new community led approach to conservation to help conserve the remaining stocks of Chambo Fish in the lake and has the following aims:

The project is now being implemented in Nkhata Bay and Nkhotakota Districts by Ripple Africa in partnership with the Department of Fisheries. This funding has enabled us to introduce the project in an accelerated way in Chia Lagoon, one of the most prominent areas in the implementation of Fish for Tomorrow project in the district. This is the biggest lagoon in Nkhotakota District, acting as a breeding area and refuge for many different fish species, including Chambo.

In Chia Lagoon, we are working more closely with local fishing communities and District Fisheries staff to introduce the new bylaws and begin the project in a more intensive way as the situation here is critical. Funding from Fondation Eagle is helping us offer the same level of support and training over the next two years in Chia Lagoon, Nkhotakota as we have done in our long running project areas in Nkhata Bay District and ensure that the decline in fish stocks is halted to safeguard livelihoods and food security.

Project Beneficiaries

The project covers the Chia Lagoon area, where there are now 14 Fish Conservation committees in operation covering 17 beach landing sites. Beneficiaries are as follows:

- 140 fish conservation committee members who are benefitting from being empowered to play an active role in the project and the training that they are receiving is building their capacity to be more active in other community activities. These committee members are fishers and non fishers and 40 of these are women.
- 191 gear owners (fishers who own boats) who will soon be benefitting from increased catches, with the resultant increase in household income that these will generate. Many of these gear

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owners employ additional fishers to work alongside them, but as we do not have the data to confirm these numbers we are only including the gear owners as beneficiaries

- An additional 670 family members of gear owners will also benefit – based on an average rural household size of 4.5 (from Malawi Demographic and Health Survey 2015-2016)
- There are also other community members who service the fishing industry in this area who will benefit – fish sellers, shop owners, boat builders etc. Applying national averages to this area, that would mean approximately 1,000 people around Chia Lagoon who service fishers will benefit, with the additional benefit to their families also.
- District Fisheries Officer and his team are being empowered and we are helping build their capacity, enabling them to perform their duties more effectively
- 100,000 people living in the southern part of Nkhotakota District obtain their fish from markets serviced from Chia Lagoon and will therefore benefit from increased supplies of larger Chambo. Eventually, once the project has become better established in Nkhotakota District, all 404,000 people living in Nkhotakota District will have more availability of animal protein from fish.

Progress to Date

Activities Of The Fish Conservation Committees

Chia Lagoon is now surrounded by 14 Fish Conservation Committees (FCCs) who are actively working with the communities around the lagoon to implement the project and raise awareness of the need for conservation of fish and fish stocks.

There are a number of activities taking place in Chia lagoon as part of implementing the project. These activities include:

- Training review meetings for the FCCs to ensure that the committee are able to carry out their work effectively and to enable the Fisheries Department and RIPPLE Africa to check how the committees are performing. Over 30 review meetings have been conducted over the past six months around the lagoon.



Chia Lagoon (Nkhotakota)
FCC awareness meeting –
November 2017



Children are encouraged to learn about the project through FCC awareness meetings at Chia Lagoon

- Higher level bylaw awareness campaigns have been conducted around the lagoon from Village Development Committees (VDCs) to Area Development Committees (ADCs) in the lagoon area. Again, these campaigns are with the aim of sensitizing the community on fish stock decline and reasons for having by-laws to regulate fishing effort.
- 20 project awareness meetings have been conducted in the past six months in the Chia area. These awareness meetings are informing people on how best fish can be conserved in Chia lagoon. These meetings occur regularly since the project is trying to change people's behaviour, educate them on the causes of the problem and engender a sense of ownership amongst fishing community members.

Confiscation Of Illegal Fishing Gears



Over 30 illegal fishing gears have been confiscated by the FCCs in conjunction with the Traditional leaders around the lagoon over the past 6 months. These confiscated illegal gears include large mosquito dragnets, each containing up to 200 small mosquito nets, monofilament gill nets and fish traps.

This photo shows 5 of the drag nets confiscated by FCCs – containing almost 1,000 individual mosquito bed nets



Confiscation of young Chambo was carried out at Nkhotakota market in December 2017. During that activity, 58.3kg of young Chambo was confiscated by the Department of Fisheries. These fish were donated to Nkhotakota District Hospital and Nkhotakota Prison.



This gained national publicity for the project in "The Nation", 28 Dec 2017

District Bylaws

Signing of the new bylaws has not progressed quite as quickly as we had hoped in Nkhotakota District. The project has been discussed extensively with Chiefs, Police officers, Councillors, Judiciary and some members of the District assembly and the main point stakeholders there have raised was the need to remove the term 'migratory' from by-laws. This is because the constitution of Malawi allows for people to be free to move throughout the country, so they felt concerned that the by-laws would not be legally valid. However, this has not prevented the project progressing as planned in Nkhotakota without the signed by-laws and we have just learned that the revised bylaws have now been approved and we hope to have the official signing ceremony in May.

Monitoring And Evaluation

We now regularly monitor all Chambo breeding areas to assess their condition and how well they are being protected to ensure that the baby fish are not put at risk by low water and that the FCC is active in protecting the area.

BREEDING AREA	CONDITION	COMMENT / ACTIVITIES
Chia Lagoon	Water present	Most of the FCCs are doing extremely well however there are some illegal activities taking place in the breeding areas around Chia lagoon. FCCs will be asked to increase their patrols and awareness raising activities here.
Chia River mouth	Water present	No illegal activities reported despite the fact that the committee is not all that strong. Further FCC training is being carried out here.

Challenges and Successes

- As part of improving the effectiveness of fishing in Chia Lagoon the chiefs around Chia lagoon want to better demarcate the areas of responsibility. This may affect the reporting structures for the FCCs but will not affect where they are located. However, the exercise has not yet been successfully concluded as the issue has been referred to the Sub Traditional Authority (STA).
- Monitoring of fish catches has not yet been established in Chia Lagoon although we have started to monitor catches at two beach landing sites in the district.
- However, this has been another successful six months for the project. We have built on our strong working relationship with the District Fisheries Office in Nkhotakota and they have reported that they now feel more empowered to carry out project activities due to our support. With the aid of another funder, we have increased their mobility through the provision of new motorcycles as they were previously hampered by lack of effective transport from getting to fishing communities.
- Women are now active participants in the project and through them, we are reaching more children with our conservation messages.

Budget

	April 2017 – Oct 2017	Oct 2017 – April 2018	TOTAL FOR YEAR 1	BUDGET FOR YEAR 1	ACTUAL VS BUDGET
Meetings					
Chief Meetings	£1,073	£0	£1,073	£1,073	£0
Government meetings	£609	£0	£609	£609	£0
Community Meetings	£1,176	£0	£1,176	£1,176	£20
Contribution to Bylaw signing	£0	£0	£0	£353	£353
Monthly costs					
Committee Meetings	£1,765	£1,764	£3,529	£3,529	£0
Fisheries staff x 2 inc transport	£1,412	£1,412	£2,824	£2,824	£0
Fisheries DFO and office	£2,118	£2,117	£4,235	£4,235	£0
Umbrella committee members	£706	£706	£1,412	£1,412	£0
Ripple Staff Costs inc motorbikes	£2,824	£2,823	£5,647	£5,647	£0
Office contribution	£706	£706	£1,412	£1,412	£0
Vehicle costs contribution	£3,530	£3,529	£7,059	£7,059	£0
Total	£15,917	£13,597	£29,514	£29,329	£353

The bylaw signing will now be taking place in Year 2 as there has been a slight delay with this because of concerns about restrictions on migratory fishers. However, we are confident that the funds allocated to this element of the project will be spent in the next 6 months.

On behalf of all you are helping by donating to our fish conservation project in Chia Lagoon, we would like to say:

TAWONGA UKONGWA! Thank you very much!



Pam Haigh
UK General Manager
6/4/2018