

FISH FOR TOMORROW PROJECT IN NKHOTAKOTA DISTRICT INTERIM REPORT APRIL 2022

Donor Name:	Foundation Eagle
Project Name:	Ripple Africa Fish For Tomorrow - ongoing support
FE Reference Number:	FF 0599-2421
Date of Grant Accepted:	24 th Sept 2021
Amount:	£30,000
Name and Location of Project:	Fish For Tomorrow, Nkhotakota District, Malawi
Period of Project:	One Year
Conversion rate, date & amount in local currency:	See Expenditure Section below
Detailed budgets and actual expenditure comparison:	See Expenditure Section below
Over/underspend:	See Expenditure Section below

Project Overview

Fish for Tomorrow is a community based fisheries protection system which focuses on *Oreochromis lidole* (known locally as Chambo) but also benefits other species. Community conservation groups known as Beach Village Committees (BVCs) with the support of Ripple Africa and District Fisheries staff, are empowered to confiscate illegal fishing nets, especially those containing mosquito nets, protect key breeding areas, enforce a closed season and issue permits to local fishers only. Illegal fishers can be fined and the BVCs keep the money to help fund future conservation activities. 65 BVCs are fully trained and active in Nkhotakota District and 13 key Chambo breeding areas are being protected. Through this protection and the ban on fishing with mosquito nets, there is increased plant growth in the breeding areas providing more protection for baby fish, and young Chambo are able to grow larger, remain in the lake and breed. This is helping to increase Chambo fish stocks (and other fish using the same breeding areas) improve biodiversity and food supplies. The project also encourages the use of larger meshed nets to catch larger Usipa, a sardine like fish and Utaka. Ripple Africa's Fish for Tomorrow project was introduced in Nkhata Bay District in 2012, in Nkhotakota District in 2016 and in Salima and Dedza Districts in 2018. This community-led initiative currently protects endangered and economically and nutritionally important fish species along over 400km of Lake Malawi's shoreline.

Details of progress of the project

Project Beneficiaries

There are 2,193 fishers living in Nkhotakota District and that their average family size is 4.5. Therefore direct beneficiaries will be 9,868 people with the entire population of Nkhotakota (393,077 people – 2018 Census) ultimately benefiting from the project. 650 fishing community members are now trained and active Beach Village Committee members

Beach Village Committees

There are 65 BVCs in the district – all fully trained and active. All have ten members and at least 3 of them are women to reflect the role that women play in fish processing and selling.

BVCs are regularly visited to assess whether they are carrying out their duties effectively and they are scored so that we can compare their performance against the expected criteria. These are as follows:

- How well do BVC members know the fishing bylaws?
- Are mosquito nets being used for fishing in their area?

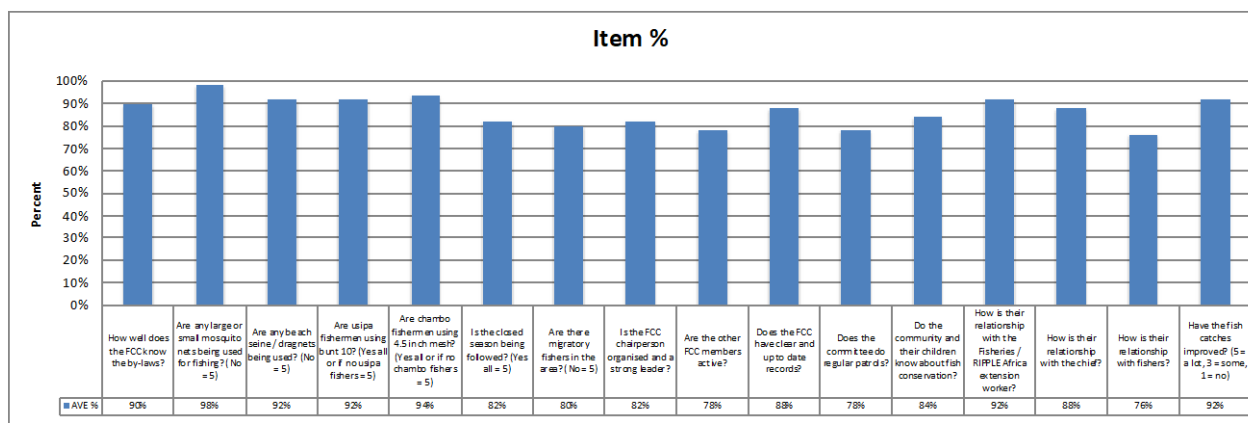
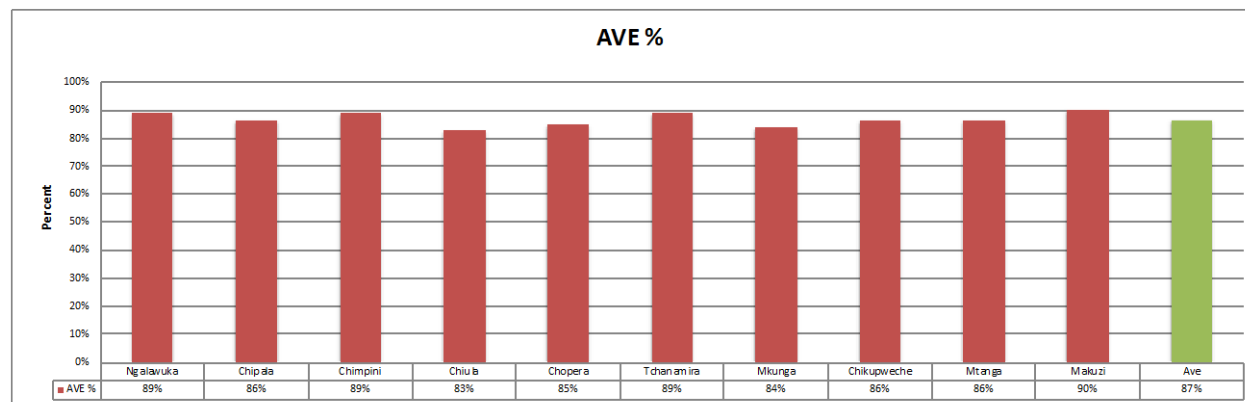
- Are beach seine / dragnets being used?
- Are Usipa fishers using Bunt 10?
- Are Chambo fishers using 4.5 inch mesh nets?
- Is the closed season being followed?
- Are there migratory fishers in the area?
- Is the BVC Chair a good leader?
- Are all BVC members active?
- Does the BVC have clear and up to date records of their activities?
- Do they carry out regular patrols?
- Do the community and local children know about fish conservation?
- How is the BVC's relationship with Fisheries and Ripple Africa, the local Chief, and fishers?
- Have fish catches improved?

The outcome of the inspections produces an overall score for each BVC so that we can measure their effectiveness and encourage the sharing of best practice. The most recent scores for each BVC are then compared so that we can focus attention on improving those who are weakest. The average score over all the BVCs in the district is 90% and the individual BVC scores range from 81% to 100%. The first graph below shows the average scores for BVCs in one of the five fishing strata (sections of the lakeshore) in Nkhotakota District and the second graph shows their average scores for each of the key measurements.

BVC PERFORMANCE

Total and Ave Scores as % 1-10

TA: Nkhotakota



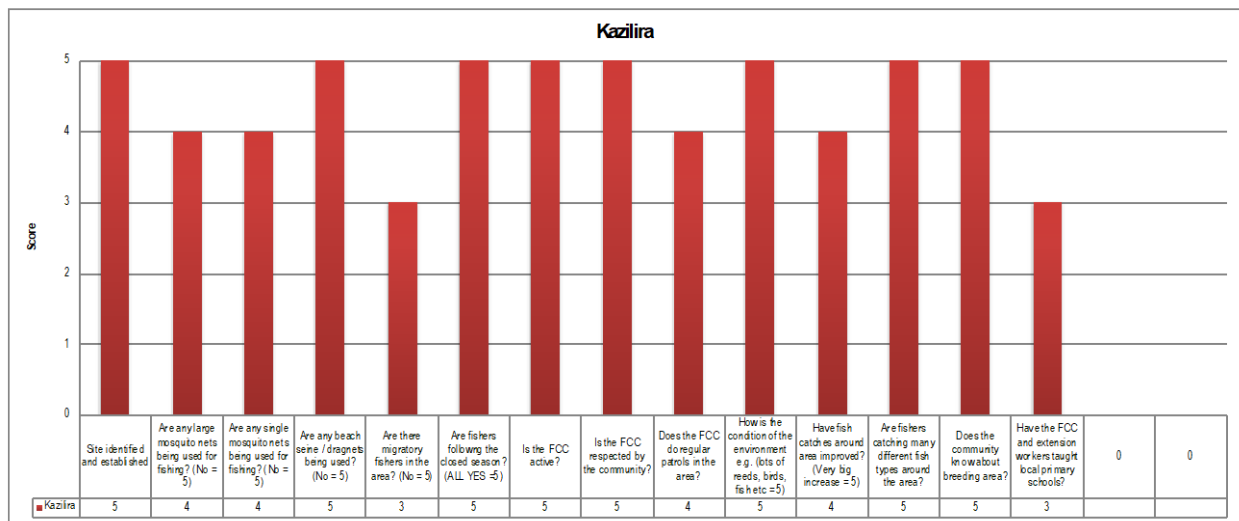
Breeding area protection

There are 13 key Chambo breeding areas in the district and each of these is audited to assess whether it is being properly protected. As with the BVCs, there are key areas that are monitored and the breeding area is scored against these so that corrective action can be targeted where needed.

As you can see from the graph below, Kazilira Breeding area has a few areas that need to be addressed, notably:

- Reducing the number of migratory fishers in the area
- Stopping the use of all mosquito nets as some are still being used here
- Increasing BVC patrols around the breeding area

- Increasing talks in schools to ensure that children no longer catch fish in the breeding area



BVC members at Dema Breeding Area



Kawiya BVC members at their local breeding area

Monofilament Nets

Despite the fact that the use of monofilament nets is on the rise in the country, the project team is working tirelessly to address the issue in the project area. As such, a number of strategies have been put in place which among others include;

- Ongoing communication with fishing communities about the effects of using monofilament nets
- Conducting meetings with shop owners selling fishing nets.
- Empowering Beach Village Committees to conduct patrols on a regular basis and hold community awareness meetings in their areas to ensure good fishing practices.
- In the last six months, a total of 65 monofilament fishing nets have been confiscated with support from the community through BVCs.
- Conducting face to face meetings with fishers using monofilament nets.

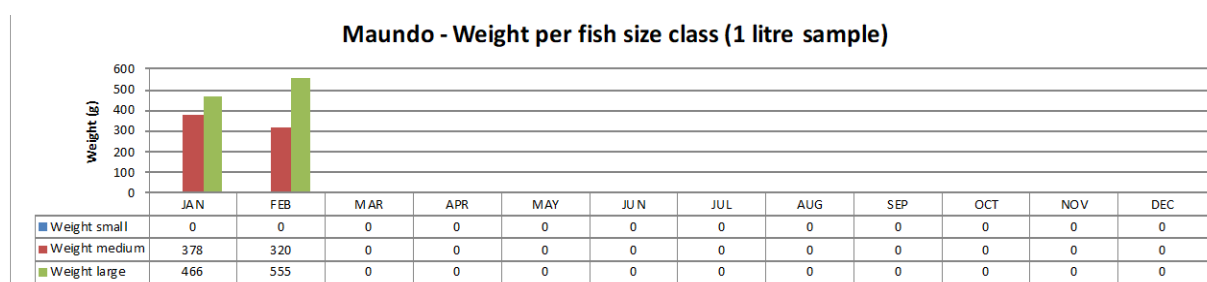
District Bylaws

Although we already have District Bylaws in Nkhosakota which were signed in May 2018, the Government of Malawi has introduced a new requirement for each district to have a District Fisheries Management Plan in place and to agree new bylaws based on this which will then enable the Director of Fisheries to give legal ownership of the fish in the lake to the fishing communities that rely on them. This is a key step in the participatory fisheries management process. In Nkhosakota District, we have almost agreed the management plans and will agree the bylaws once there has been further consultation over the next few months.

Fish Catch Data

We are monitoring fish catches for Chambo and Usipa. We have 20 Chambo catch data collectors who record their catches on three days per month and show how many small medium and large Chambo they catch. From this we are able to assess income based on market fish process. Since the start of this funding, we have not had many months of catch data as the closed season runs from November to March. Therefore we will report more on this at the end of the year.

For Usipa, we have 12 fishers recording the contents of 1 litre buckets and dividing the catch into small, medium and large Usipa to assess the average catch. This enables us to assess the weight of fish and also the proportion of small, medium and large fish being caught. As you can see in January and February, no small Usipa were caught at this landing site and as there were more larger fish, this will have increased the income made from the catch.



CHALLENGES

- Lack of support from some local leaders.
- Existence of inactive BVC Members who do not actively participate in the project.
- Resistance to changing to better ways of fishing and use of legal gears by some fishers.
- Persistent use of monofilament nets by some fishers in the project area.
- Failure of some chiefs and some BVCs to use the existing by-laws during case hearings.

SOLUTIONS TO THE CHALLENGES

- Face to face meetings have been held between local leaders and District council members to address lack of support from local leaders and encourage more active participation from them.
- Some BVCs have been revamped to get rid of inactive members on the committees.
- There have been ongoing meetings with chiefs, BVCs and the fishing communities about the importance of conserving fish to reduce the use of illegal gears and non-compliance with fishing regulations.
- Review meetings with chiefs have been held to reinforce how that should use fisheries bylaws more effectively and how to manage offenders.

SUCSESSES

In the last six months:

- 65 monofilament fishing nets have been confiscated by BVCs.
- 20 review and planning meetings have been held with BVCs.
- 12 closed season awareness meetings have been held with fishing communities.
- 23 community awareness meetings on Fish Conservation have been held.
- 22 school talks have been carried out in primary and secondary schools in the project area.
- Six monthly management meetings have taken place.
- Two stakeholder quarterly meetings have been held.
- 16 BVCs in the project area have been revamped to ensure that all members are fully committed.
- Five training sessions have been held on fish breeding area management.
- The team have facilitated the development of the new District Fisheries Management Plan.
- Data on fish catches and income, BVC performance, breeding area performance and details of fishers have all been collected.

EXPENDITURE

OCT 21 – MAR 22

Exchange Rate	1,093.22	1,100.20	1,129.37	1,148.50	1,197.70	1,223.61	
	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Total
Salaries Coordinators & Managers	£983.52	£971.75	£2,717.55	£879.69	£811.28	£794.10	£7,157.89
Travel and Subsistence (T&S) Coordinators & Managers	£505.02	£320.67	£1,022.52	£651.11	£971.69	£591.53	£4,062.54
T&S for Fisheries staff	£667.02	£610.98	£566.87	£608.21	£548.22	£737.90	£3,739.19
T&S for Chiefs & Community	£622.65	£762.86	£531.32	£825.18	£285.86	£330.99	£3,358.87
T&S for Other Govt staff	£388.53	£89.80	£197.59	£567.31	£116.22	£1,080.92	£2,440.38
Enforcement costs	£233.71	£173.15	£186.39	£226.38	£181.18		£1,000.81
Monitoring and Evaluation	£405.41	£405.41	£405.41	£405.41	£405.41	£405.41	£2,432.43
Other	£60.74	£20.63	£9.92	£13.41	£39.67	£4.25	£148.62
Nkhotakota office costs	£308.19	£152.89	£120.15	£205.36	£101.39	£285.88	£1,173.88
Vehicles	£140.78	£566.08	£885.45		£775.53	£595.92	£2,963.77
Vehicle Fuel	£443.83	£314.74	£302.47	£280.71	£358.32	£565.08	£2,265.15
Motorbikes Fish	£127.88	£124.52	£104.04	£130.26	£114.39	£287.67	£888.76
Motorbike Fuel Fish	£207.00	£187.92	£143.93	£205.09	£175.84	£179.14	£1,098.93
Other Admin and Transport costs							
Salaries	£357.19	£354.93	£419.97	£399.03	£344.07	£326.98	£2,202.17
Airtel and TNM costs Chintheche	£239.00	£255.64	£249.03	£249.24	£548.97	£6.33	£1,548.20
Chintheche Office Costs	£448.22	£432.96	£431.26	£196.39	£495.81	£296.07	£2,300.71
Chintheche equipment		£13.36					£13.36
T&S Office Staff	£25.84	£21.59	£61.54	£33.30	£57.29	£73.14	£272.70
T&S for Govt staff				£21.77	£97.33	£120.54	£239.64
Vehicles other	£132.47	£98.68	£201.30	£209.27	£272.07	£34.06	£947.86
Vehicle other Fuel	£209.32	£175.40	£220.13	£141.28	£134.94	£208.01	£1,089.08
	£6,506.32	£6,053.96	£8,776.85	£6,248.41	£6,835.48	£6,923.93	£41,344.94

SPEND AGAINST BUDGET

	Total	Budget	Over Under
Salaries Coordinators & Managers	£7,157.89	£5,829.32	£1,328.57
T&S Coordinators & Managers	£4,062.54	£3,274.75	£787.79
T&S for Fisheries staff	£3,739.19	£4,059.88	-£320.68
T&S for Chiefs & Community	£3,358.87	£4,637.82	-£1,278.95
T&S for Other Govt staff	£2,440.38	£1,538.16	£902.22
Enforcement costs	£1,000.81	£427.45	£573.36
Monitoring and Evaluation	£2,432.43	£2,475.00	-£42.57
Other	£148.62	£1,301.95	-£1,153.33
Nkhotakota office costs	£1,173.88	£2,596.22	-£1,422.34
Vehicles	£2,963.77	£1,375.59	£1,588.18
Vehicle Fuel	£2,265.15	£1,756.56	£508.59
Motorbikes Fish	£888.76	£1,355.25	-£466.50
Motorbike Fuel Fish	£1,098.93	£1,084.36	£14.57
Other Admin and Transport costs			
Salaries	£2,202.17	£1,635.74	£566.43
Airtel and TNM costs Chintheche	£1,548.20	£2,355.47	-£807.27
Chintheche Office Costs	£2,300.71	£1,620.78	£679.92
Chintheche equipment	£13.36	£277.09	-£263.73
T&S Office Staff	£272.70	£478.42	-£205.72
T&S for Govt staff	£239.64		£239.64
Vehicles other	£947.86	£1,442.79	-£494.94
Vehicle other Fuel	£1,089.08	£1,856.49	-£767.41
Total Nkhotakota	£41,344.94	£41,379.11	-£34.16

PHOTOS



Some of the monofilament nets that have been confiscated in the project area.



A community education meeting at Nkhomo Fisheries Beach landing site.



Ripple Africa's Nkhotakota Manager, Joyce Banda, facilitating a face to face meeting with local leaders to encourage more support for the project



Ripple Africa and Fisheries Extension Workers meeting with Thawe Beach Village Committee to monitor progress

CASE STUDIES

Mr. Rueben Nyanga lives in Kanyangale village. He is 60 years old, has been married for 32 years and has eight children. He started his Usipa fish selling business with MK28,000 in 1993 but the business made little profit for many years because of the lack of fish. However, since the introduction of the Fish for Tomorrow project he has been making much larger profits. Mr Nyanga commended the project, saying it has really helped him to boost his business and at the same time improved his living standards together with his family.

From the profits he makes from selling fish, he has managed to build two houses (one occupied by his family and the other for rent), he runs a grocery shop, owns an engine boat and also a car which he uses to transport fish to Lilongwe and Kasungu for sales and recently he has secured new land for other developments. His advice to all fishing communities is that they should embrace the project in order to ensure sustainability of fishery resources. Mr Nyanga concluded by saying that his savings have increased to MK1,000,000.



Mr. Nyanga with his car



Mr. Nyanga in front of his shop

Mr. Kondwani Kamphata lives in Thawe village. He is 41 years old, has been married for 19 years and has five children. He is both a fisher and a business man who buys and sells fish after processing them. He started his fishing and fish selling business in 2000 in order to earn a living. When he started these two businesses, fishing was not very good as only small numbers of Usipa were caught and they were very small because he was using illegal and under meshed fishing gears. He said that the introduction of the Ripple Africa Fish Conservation project in the district has changed everything in the fishing industry and his businesses too. The fish catches have increased and as a fisher he has now been taught to use legal and recommended fishing gears which have changed his old ways of fishing.

He has now managed to save enough money from his two businesses to build three brick houses (one occupied by his family and the other two for rent). He has also bought an engine boat which he is using for fishing and he is paying school fees for two of his children at a private secondary school. His savings have increased from MK30,000 to MK600,000. "I am now financially stable and very grateful with this project to be honest". Mr. Kamphata said.



Mr. Kamphata on his boat



Mr Kamphata at one of his houses which will soon have an iron roof to replace the reeds

Mr. Oswald Mwase lives in Chongole village in Nkhotakota district. He is 46, has been married for 19 years and has five children. He has been involved with fishing and selling fish since 2004 but the use of illegal fishing gears meant that he only caught small Usipa which were sold at cheaper prices. As a result, his business failed to grow due to the low prices of the fish. But when the Fish for Tomorrow Project was introduced in 2016, things changed for the better, because of the conservation training provided. Mr Mwase has now managed to start saving money due to the improved fish catches in his area.

On a monthly basis he now saves MK20,000. With these savings he is managing to pay school fees for his children and other siblings, he is now financially stable, has built a new family home and has built and runs his own shop at Chongole Trading Centre. In addition to that, he has built a video room where people from the community come to watch football matches. He has also bought a new engine and a bigger boat with new legal fishing gear to extend his fishing business.



Mr Mwase in his video room - very popular with local people who love watching football matches there



Mr Mwase in his shop

Mrs. Doreen Kawaja George, a 31 year old woman with one child, comes from Chizongwe and she started her fish selling business in 2020. Through her business she has managed to start saving in the savings group which was started by Chizongwe Beach Village Committee - she saves MK5,000 a month. From these savings, she has managed to buy five goats, three ducks and five chickens and now runs a successful animal rearing business. She has also managed to buy a canoe and always uses legal fishing gear when she fishes.

Mrs George says that her success is as a result of the Fish for Tomorrow project introduced by Ripple Africa. She is urging other women in the project area to become self sufficient and to value the contribution that they make to their community. As Treasurer and Vice Chair of Chizongwe Beach Village Committee, she is now also teaching other community members how to conserve fish.



Mrs. George sitting on her canoe



Mrs. George standing in front of her goat kraal