



Strategic Plan

2010 to 2014

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Purpose of the Strategic Plan

This plan lays out the direction and framework for the operation of the Kesho Trust from 2010 to 2014. This strategic plan is being developed to help us sharpen our focus so that we can optimally achieve our mission. It is a high-level picture of our mission, vision, strategies and goals. It will outline the foundation for many of our future programs and practices.

Specifically it is expected that this plan will:

- guide the establishment and building of the organization
- set direction for development of the program
- establish targets for fundraising
- provide comprehensive information about the Trust for partners and donors
- provide the basis for monitoring successful development

Background

The world over protected areas and conservation lands are being threatened by the increasing intensity of unsustainable land and water use practices. In developing countries it is often the poorest and most marginal communities that are forced to use their land unsustainably because of the short term requirement to cover basic needs. Communities often lack knowledge and understanding of the benefits that can be gained from involvement with protected areas and how working to utilize the environment sustainably can bring multiple benefits. Climate change, population growth, unsustainable grazing, land conversion and new economic developments are putting increasing pressures on the environment. Without the opportunity to understand and adapt to these changes communities will find it hard to survive.

The Kesho Trust is an organization formed to help address this situation. We support local communities to understand the conservation values of the environment in which they live and help them implement development interventions that are compatible with and build on those natural resource values. We also assist protected areas management agencies to work with local communities in the cooperative achievement of both protected areas and community objectives.

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We aim to support practical solutions to conservation problems through the strengthening of protected area management and community based development that is compatible with conservation. We strive to foster all four elements of what is often termed the conservation quartet: research to understand the problem, education to explain it, community involvement to ensure participation and acceptance, and implementation of a solution. It is through enabling communities to gain a greater understanding of, appreciation for, and implementation of community conservation practices that the integrity of protected areas and other natural environments will be sustained.

Strategic Direction

Vision

A world where healthy, strong communities live in harmony with their environment and are instrumental in ensuring that the protected areas and conservation lands they live alongside are thriving and achieving the objectives for which they were established.

Mission

To facilitate and support community led activities that foster positive relationships between local communities and the conservation of their protected areas. We work with community organizations and individuals to facilitate and enhance their capacity to achieve long term sustainability of community based conservation and development initiatives.

We have chosen to work in eastern and southern Africa as well as western and arctic Canada.

“The Kesho Trust supports practical solutions to conservation problems”



Goals

- To preserve the natural environment in and around protected areas;
- To strengthen communities and build the capacity of community-based organizations by supporting them to identify and carry out local initiatives which sustain and benefit from environmental conservation.

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Strategic Aims

In order to achieve our vision of a world where healthy, strong communities live in harmony with their environment, the Kesho Trust will:

- Promote and facilitate positive community development activity that is compatible with conservation and which allows communities to benefit more fully and directly from their position as neighbours to important conservation lands.
- Form partnerships with local community organizations who share our values and goals and help them find appropriate development strategies, mechanisms and learn the skills needed to improve their lives.
- Promote a belief in the value of community based environmental conservation and help build stronger and mutually beneficial relationships between protected areas and local communities.

Working Principles

The Kesho Trust aims to facilitate and support community led activities that foster positive relationships between conservation areas and local communities. In doing so we hope to try and counter the still persistent perception, held in many parts of the world that conservation and sustainable use are in conflict. In carrying out its work the Trust will always seek to affirm that any activity it lends support to contributes to conservation and development that is sustainable.

The following working principles:

- small scale:** interventions are made at the grassroots levels in ways that can be integrated into the ongoing development work of communities. The intention is not to overwhelm and replace existing community structures but rather to strengthen and support the development of these frameworks through the addition of new skills, ideas and incentives.

**“fostering
positive
relationships
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partnership: partnering with local community based organizations is a critical factor in the success of grass-roots development initiatives. The intention of our partnerships is to strengthen and expand the capacity of local organizations over the longer term and by doing so not only enable them to sustain their development initiatives into the future but also enable us to learn and share from them their experiences and skills.

community based: community ownership of development initiatives helps ensure acceptance and support for the changes in the long term. We work to ensure the whole community enters into activities collectively so there is a sense of shared commitment towards seeing programs through themselves rather than relying on external inputs.

facilitative: the Kesho Trust acts as a facilitator to help communities and local organizations implement new and innovative ideas. The Trust also facilitates the building of local and regional networks that will continue to support community development in the future.

exchange of experiences: an important part of strengthening community organizations comes through the exchange of ideas and experiences beyond the local environment to regional and international levels. The Trust will use its wide geographical base to provide national and international exchange opportunities to encourage communities to learn from others.

inclusion: inevitably communities will be made up from a diverse range of individuals some of whom tend to be more visible than others. The Kesho Trust seeks to ensure that all members of the community (women, young people, disabled people) feel able to contribute to the identification of needs and can benefit from development initiatives being carried out.

“ensure that all members of the community feel able to contribute to and benefit from development initiatives.”



Objectives and Activities

Objective 1

Engage with local partners through donor funded projects

The project framework we use to help us determine which project initiatives to support is outlined below. In addition, conservation awareness is an essential component of all our work.

There are three types of projects that make up our framework:

1. **Community-based conservation projects** focusing specifically on conservation measures such as habitat enhancement;
2. **Economic development projects** targeting improved livelihoods built on sound conservation practices; and,
3. **Conservation education projects** that build awareness and commitment to conservation values within the community and beyond.

The partnership element of these project areas is crucial. Building long term relationships with like-minded local organizations will be a focus of our partnership effort. Networking with other larger international development organizations will also facilitate the growth of our conservation development efforts.

Initially the Kesho Trust will build on the current relationships and project focus that is just beginning to become firmly established. Efforts will also be made to strengthen connections with already existing linkages and partnerships that have not yet emerged as focal points of activity for the Trust.

In Africa, the focus will be on building increasingly strong partnerships with Ereto Maasai Youth in Tanzania and supporting activity in the West Lunga Trust in Zambia. Partnerships with communities in Bunda District and in Saadani Park as well as other organizations such as the Sana Trust and the International Centre for Sustainable Cities will be priorities. Such collaboration should include the establishment of an office base in Dar es Salaam.

In Canada, the focus will be on expanding the network and impact of the Nature Child Reunion initiative and building the principles of youth engagement into all our programming. In addition, the Trust will seek concrete opportunities to work collaboratively with the Muskwa- Kechika initiative, especially on international initiatives focused on awareness-raising.

“the focus will be on building increasingly strong partnerships ”

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These efforts will be achieved through specific project initiatives, volunteer assistance and direct fundraising. The primary elements of our partnerships will be projects that focus on research, community development, communications /education, and eco-tourism.

Key activities

Africa

- focus the program on long term relationships with a select group of local partner organizations
- where there is program initiative that is particularly valuable but no local organization to partner with, work to create and develop such an organization, especially using the capacity of existing partners
- develop relationships with government in the areas in which the Trust is working - parks, tourism and wildlife agencies, and local government
- become involved with development networks in the sectors and areas of interest

Canada

- focus the program on developing and maintaining a strong network for the Nature Child Reunion initiative that can expand geographically and across disciplines and sectors of society
- maintain other partnership relationships with strong entities that provide synergistic opportunities to achieve our common objectives
- promote the values inherent in the Nature Child Reunion program
- develop relationships internationally
- support expanded public awareness of the Muskwa Kechika and its internationally important character and resources
- develop a youth component to the conservation awareness effort within the Muskwa-Kechika

Partner exchanges

- build Africa/Canada and Africa/Africa linkages and exchanges into project proposals to ensure project activities benefit from the experience of other partners
- link partners with key known contacts, agencies and organizations with shared experience



Objective 2

Build broad public support through awareness raising, donation support and volunteer participation

The Kesho Trust will focus its efforts on building broad public support for the work from amongst the Canadian public. In particular we hope to attract Canadians with a general interest in conservation as well as those concerned about international development and tackling global poverty. Corporate participation will also be important and we will make special efforts to attract business support from sectors that are directly related to our and our partners' work.

Awareness-raising is very important. We will attempt to promote the work and the outcomes of the work through a variety of means including web information, public events, displays, news media, and through professional, business and interest group networks.

One of the key ways the Kesho Trust can expand its network is through the use of volunteers. The Trust will develop the necessary protocols, policies and support mechanisms to provide opportunities working with our partner organizations. This is not intended to be a large volunteer program but one that is highly focused on the provision of specific skills identified by our partner organizations. Numbers will be limited but volunteers will have a high profile and contribute to further fundraising efforts related to project activities.

Key activities

donor support

- work to achieve a balance of project support with core strategic funding
- establish credibility and long term relationship with key funders
- demonstrate the necessary qualifications for base funding through CIDA partnership branch
- seek special funds from CIDA for volunteer program and exchange visits
- generate support from key private individual and corporate donors [10% of income]
- build a strong base of regular general public contributions [15% of income] and develop mechanisms to ensure this can be maintained

“the Kesho Trust can expand its network is through the use of volunteers.”

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communications

- develop key strategic information documents concerning the Trust, its programs, partners and directions that can be used for awareness raising and fundraising including brochures, a strategic plan summary, newsletters and mechanisms for supporting the organization
- expand and maintain the web site as an active information source and marketing mechanism including up-to-date reporting of progress in all the project activities that are on-going
- plan and implement special events especially as part of project activities to ensure that the work of the Trust and partners is seen and understood among a broad audience
- develop a distribution network or contact list of donors, government contacts and organizations that will receive periodic information and updates on the work of the Trust

“We need nearby nature everywhere, especially in the most urban neighbourhoods.”

Organizational Management and Development

The Kesho Trust realizes that as a relatively new organization there are a number of key challenges which need to be overcome. We will need to develop:

- profile as a contributing entity in conservation in both Africa and Canada
- working partnerships with local community organizations and protected areas agencies
- cooperative ventures with other development organizations
- funding support from a variety of donors and the public

All these issues require that we set up and maintain good governance, management and staffing procedures as well as the necessary systems to support open communication and accountability. As the organization grows so will we look to ensuring our administrative and financial systems remain efficient and appropriate.



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Governance, management and staffing

As resources become available we will develop staff positions to facilitate the key functions of the organization including fundraising, communications and administration. During the period of this plan it is anticipated that such responsibilities will be conducted as part-time contract positions in both Canada and overseas. Clear and comprehensive terms and conditions will be developed for all staff, including volunteers.

During the period of this plan we also aim to develop a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for all organizational functions. We will maintain partnership agreements in a clear and efficient manner, monitoring the results of the agreements against the expectations to determine future directions.

We will look to maintain an active advisory committee that is engaged and contributing to the work of the Trust and to develop a long term strategy for the development and expansion of the board.

Funding and accountability

Budget estimates are highly variable and dependent on project funding. Evidence from recent years supports this view. It is a priority for the Kesho Trust to strengthen its core funding revenue independent of project funding. Efforts will be made to build core funding over the time horizon of this plan to a level that will support core staffing and operations of the organization. Such a level would require approximately \$350,000/year.

Project funding, on average, is anticipated to reach \$150,000/year in Canada and \$200,000/year in Africa.

As one of the long term goals of the Trust is to be self-sustaining, we will ensure efforts are made to build the trust fund over the plan period through maintaining the policies currently in place with respect to automatic contributions from income; support from the fund should not begin until the strategic plan target of \$2,000,000 is reached; investment decisions should be made progressively by the board as the fund grows [the current bank account is inadequate as an investment mechanism]

Planning, monitoring and evaluation

Information management will be important for the Trust in developing its partnerships and building annual revenues. There will be a commitment to effective information gathering, recording and presentation to ensure these goals are met. Specifically we will:

“maintain an active advisory committee that is engaged and contributing to the work of the Trust”

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- develop a system of data collection and assessment including a comprehensive data base on all partner organizations, beneficiaries as well as project activities and impacts
- assess the status and success of this plan annually throughout the plan period and make modifications as required
- develop policies on frequency of and approaches to monitoring and evaluation in projects
- look to develop innovative ways to ensure the views and experiences of partners and their beneficiaries can form part of our regular monitoring and evaluation activities
- build partnership agreements which enable communities to set their own targets for measuring the progress and success of program initiatives we support
- build relationships with research institutions and organizations to cooperate on research methodologies and applications relevant to program areas of the Trust



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