

SUSTAINABILITY FIRST YEAR HALF REPORT 2017

2017 is the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development as declared by the United Nations. In view of this world concern we feel that we must do more to focus on Sustainable development with regard to our four Sustainable pillars: Conservation, Community tourism, Education and Livelihood.

Taking these four pillars as our blueprint, we agreed to **focus primarily on Education** this year, including both **external and internal education** (within our company and outside of the company). This means that we have our existing projects running concurrently with the new.

- **Under the Keep Her in School Program**, which continued in the first half of the year, Uniglobe Lets Go Travel (ULGT) staff raised money and the company matches their sum raised, to purchase sanitary towels for less fortunate girls in Kalalu Secondary School, Nanyuki. This enabled 128 girls to achieve better attendance, thereby enhancing their academic performance.
- In February, **Sustainable Travel and Tourism Agenda (STTA)** gave a talk to our staff, explaining more what Sustainability actually means, and why we should live and preach these standards. This “internal education” helps increase our understanding of the matter of sustainability, builds capacity and in turn “best practices” within our organisation, as well as helping in the “external education” of the same.



- We suggested to the teaching staff of the five schools that we have worked with, under our “external education” pillar, that they instigate some projects relevant to conservation and livelihood. They felt that this would be difficult in view of the prevailing drought, so ULGT challenged them to an essay competition, the subject being *“The reasons why our river is drying up.”*

The essence of the project was to encourage the children to think about how and why drought occurs and how they could improve the situation in future, through forest conservation, water harvesting and management etc., thereby lessening the impact of drought. The essay competition was to create awareness amongst students and their teachers, as well as the local community, on the importance of conservation. The project was considered to be a success, each school submitting 3 of their best essays, and the winners in each school, as judged by our Sustainable Tourism committee, were awarded books on conservation.

- It has become increasingly evident that we require a broader outlook than Sustainable Tourism, one that will include the whole range of travel, including air travel and other transport, some of the major contributors to our carbon footprint. A new committee was formed to work on **Sustainable Travel**.
- ULGT and STTA created a new project, the **Product Watch**. This is a program where STTA engages interns and university students who are involved in their various student programs to visit tourist attractions within Nairobi, rate their sustainability level and submit a written report. Two locations were visited each month from February to June, and a report made on each by two students. As an incentive ULGT would give KES 1,500 towards each visit amounting to KES 3,000 per month, ongoing.
- STTA and ULGT ventured into yet another partnership under the **STTA Monthly Student Seminars (IYSTD)**, where seminars are held at various tourism colleges and universities, and the student who submits the best report is awarded KES 3000, sponsored by ULGT. Two awards are made each month.
- On 26th April, six ULGT staff attended the **2nd Private sector conference on Sustainable Inclusive Business**. This included talks and workshops, extending our “Internal education”. Angela made a presentation in one of the workshops, thus contributing to external education.

As a follow up to the conference, we invited Karin Boomsma of Sustainable Inclusive Business Kenya (SIB) and Elfrieke Van Galen of The Rock Group, Netherlands, two organizations that train and guide businesses in becoming Sustainable inclusive, to give a talk to our staff on how we can become more of a Sustainable Inclusive company.



- In June, Alan Dixson visited 3 schools in the Nanyuki area to **plant trees**. He and the students planted 80 trees in Kalalu Secondary, and 25 in both Umandi and Ndemu Primary schools. The trees were planted by the form 1 students at Kalalu, and standard 5 students at the primary schools. The idea being that the students can now care for their tree through the next four years whilst they continue at that school. The species of trees planted were chosen so as to be beneficial to the children on maturity in the schools feeding program, such as avocado and orange trees, as well as indigenous Cedar trees, and some exotic Grevillea. This activity and project falls under our Conservation and Education pillars.



- On 14 and 15th June we participated in the **3rd Green Tourism Summit in Africa**. Three of our staff attended the summit and Alan made a presentation on “The journey towards being a Sustainable Tour Operator.” This summit provided internal education for the staff and included external education through the presentation by our MD.



CONCLUSION:

Being a sustainable inclusive business is a company that is future proof. It means that you are ready to brace yourself for the future regardless of what the general business circumstances are. For us as ULGT, being sustainable should go beyond our office to being the daily practice by our staff, and on into the communities we interact and engage with. We are in a trade where our products are directly linked to our communities through tourism, and on the hand in travel, we are among the top in creating carbon emissions. Therefore, practicing responsible travel and tourism is not a choice but it is a must practice for ULGT.

Expenditure for January to June 2017

- Keep Her in School - KES 28,160
- ULGT and STTA Product Watch - KES 15,000
- ULGT and STTA Monthly student Seminars – KES 15,000
- Tree planting - KES 21,000