

## Kenya coast

3 million people live in areas of forest on the Kenyan coast. These forests have a great variety of plants and animals. The organisation Birdlife International say that it is a globally important area for birds. The forests are very important to local people for food and other things they need to survive but also because of their traditional beliefs.



### Problems the communities face:

- Kenya is a low income country with a population which is growing fast.
- Kenya has suffered from long spells of drought in recent years as a result of our warming planet.
- The forest is being cut down.

### What's the project doing?

Supporting local communities, helping them to have a stronger voice in decisions that are made about the forests.

Trying to influence government policy and what happens to protect the forests.

Trying to influence large developments to make sure that they don't damage the environment.

Making sure that farming and fishing don't damage the environment and

supporting farming that doesn't damage the forest.

Encouraging fishing that doesn't damage the environment but gives people another source of food. Encouraging things like bee keeping.

A Village Savings Bank has been set up that lends people small amounts of money to set up businesses.

The Clean Energy Village project, is helping to reduce the cutting down of trees by providing communities with energy efficient stoves and solar lighting systems. The stoves are made from easily found and locally sourced materials such as clay, sand, water and a bit of cement.

## How Successful is it so far:

### The Clean Energy project

The new stoves use less wood and are less smoky, so-

- There is less air pollution in the homes so people are healthier
- Children (mainly girls) spend less time collecting firewood
- Fewer trees are cut down

The solar lights mean

- There is less air pollution in the homes so people are healthier
- People don't have to buy fuel for lamps
- Children can study longer in the evenings and so do better at school
- Less fossil fuel is burnt

The management of the forest has improved. In the Kaya forest people have been able to plant trees. In various places the government is protecting the forest better.

The state of rivers has been improved by encouraging farmers to grow sugar cane in a way that uses less water.

A tree-growers' association has been set up in Kwale. There are more than 200 members who look after 3,000 hectares of forest. The project has helped the members to set up a co-operative to find a market for things they can produce in the forest - e.g. building poles, timber and honey.



The project has supported 145 farmers to start climate-smart farming in Lamu and Tana River Counties. These farmers are already reporting increased crop yields. In the lake Kenyatta area 60 farmers have been supported to start tree planting and soil / water conservation and in Kwale the project is piloting solar water pumps.

## People

Hilary Masuma Kalama lives in the village of Kauma and used to work as a fisherman. He has children and grandchildren.



He is an elder of the Kauma people in Kaya forest. His knowledge of the forest comes from his father and grandfather and dates back to the 16th Century when their people first settled in the Kaya forests. He is now passing what he knows on to his grandson.



This 2.5 minute video shows Hilary Masuma Kalama and his grandson -

<https://sizeofwales.org.uk/projects/forests-coastal-kenya/#video>

## **Mama Zainab, who has had a solar lamp said:**

*"I am very happy and grateful for the solar lanterns provided by WWF. This has helped me to save 40 Kenyan shillings every day which I used to spend buying paraffin for my tin lamp and charging my mobile phone. My children are now able to study for three hours in the evening.... Before then, they would only study for 1 hour after which their eyes would turn red and itchy due to smoke from the tin lamp.*



*"This is like a real miracle to us, I never imagined this kind of transformation...we are so grateful to WWF...we request others to join and support this cause so that many more households can be transformed."*

## Emily Jacob, a pupil in class 7 said:

*"I am now able to read and complete my homework. Before the solar lanterns and energy saving cook stoves I never finished my studies. After school, I would go to a nearby forest to gather firewood and when I could study, the kerosene tin lamp smoke was choking – I could barely concentrate.*



*"Thanks to the lanterns, I improved from 321 marks to 379 in only one year! I am sure to pass my primary examination next year and join a good high school. I would like to study forest conservation at university."*

In this area Size of Wales works with the charity WWF (World Wildlife Fund)