



Kipsaina Education and Environment Partnership (KEEP)

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts

For the year ending 30 November 2022

Charity number: 1175806

www.keepkenya.org

Reference and administrative information for the period ended 30 November 2022

Charity Name	Kipsaina Education and Environment Partnership (KEEP)
Legal Status	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Governing Document	Constitution
Registered Charity number	1175806
Date registered with Charity Commission	20 November 2017
Principal address	Flat 3 Rokeby Hall Greta Bridge Barnard Castle County Durham DL12 9RZ
Trustees	Sam Forsyth Rubel Quader Mary Charrington
Bank	HSBC 1 Prospect Place Darlington County Durham DL3 7LQ

KEEP TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

Kipsaina Education and Environment Partnership (henceforth “KEEP”) presents its fifth Trustees’ Annual Report. The charity was registered with the Charity Commission on 20 November 2017. It operates as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), which provides protection for the charity, trustees and volunteers and helps the charity be sustainable.

This report sets out a summary of the activities and achievements of the charity in its fifth year of operation, to the period ending 30 November 2022.

As a small charity, the year’s financial performance is presented on a Receipts and Payments basis which appears at the end of this document. A summary of the fifth year’s finances is presented in the financial review section.

To the best of the trustees’ knowledge, the prepared financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the charity's Constitution and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP).

Objects

The objects of KEEP as set out in its Constitution are twofold:

1. *For the public benefit, the conservation, protection and improvement of wetlands in western Kenya, in particular, but not exclusively, the Saiwa Swamp ecosystem and surrounding area.*
2. *The advancement of education for children living in the Saiwa Swamp ecosystem and surrounding area, in particular, but not exclusively, at the Kipsaina Primary School, by improving their physical learning environment and by promoting environmental awareness.*

KEEP is the result of a long-standing friendship, now stretching to 30 years, between UK filmmaker turned biology teacher Sam Forsyth, and Kenyan environmentalist, educator and community activist Maurice Wanjala. KEEP works closely, though not exclusively, with Maurice’s locally based NGO Kipsaina Crane and Wetland Conservation Group (KCWCG) - registered as a Community Based Organisation (CBO) in Kenya - to provide enhanced educational opportunities for children in the Kipsaina area, and to promote the conservation and improvement of the local wetlands. These wetlands provide protected nesting sites for up to six pairs of Crowned Cranes and are a habitat for the Sitatunga, a rare aquatic antelope, as well as a range of other wetland species.

Governance

KEEP is administered and managed by a board of three trustees who manage the charity on a voluntary basis. As set out in the charity’s Constitution, the three founding trustees were initially appointed for 4 years (Sam Forsyth – *for brevity referred to as SSF in this document*), 3 years (Rubel Quader) and 2 years (Mary Charrington).

Subsequently all trustees will be re-elected or appointed anew for a 3-year term by a resolution

passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees, with due regard given to the skill, knowledge and experience required for the effective administration of the KEEP CIO. The charity must have a minimum of three trustees at all times; if the number falls below this minimum then the remaining trustee(s) may act only to call a meeting of the charity trustees in order to appoint a new trustee(s). Mary Charrington, Rubel Quader and SSF were re-elected as KEEP trustees for 3 years each in November 2019, November 2020 and November 2021 respectively after their initial tenures came to an end. Subsequently Mary Charrington was re-elected to serve for a further 3 years in November 2022.

In the fifth year of its operation, the trustees of KEEP held 2 trustee meetings. Decisions are made by the approval of a majority of the trustees. The trustees have ensured that all charitable activities and approval of its future operational plans have been undertaken with regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and in accordance with KEEP's Constitution and Objects.

Trustees are required to familiarise themselves with the charity's regulatory requirements and to that end have attended the Charity Commission's seminars for charities working in high-risk areas, as well as undertaking a course on data protection. In addition, they follow advice from specialist organisations on safeguarding.

Fundraising and Donations

Fundraising this year has been limited but includes the following.

- £111 raised in private donations, including Gift Aid
- A further £3,235 donated by Barnard Castle Rotary Club and other Rotary organisations across the Northeast of England, specifically for KEEP's Interlocking Stabilized Soil Bricks (ISSB) and Rotary Digital Bridges projects (details below)

As of November 2021, Virgin Money Giving was no longer in operation. As a result, KEEP's online fundraising platform has been moved to the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF).

As noted in the last two annual reports, KEEP has evolved from an organisation based purely around direct fundraising from the public, to one that aims over the medium to long term to raise funds and support from larger NGOs and grant-giving bodies for larger projects. In parallel, KEEP is increasingly acting as an advocate by introducing the Kipsaina community to such bodies in order to facilitate direct collaborations. KEEP has been aided in this function through the pro-bono guidance of Felicity Jones of Thinking Philanthropy (TP). Felicity offered her help having been introduced to SSF and the work of KEEP through Richard Joy of Innovate UK. The largest of these direct collaborations, as facilitated by KEEP, over the period of the fifth annual report has been a tree-planting contract between our partner KCWCG and the Dutch/German social business Ecosia (www.ecosia.org), an "eco" search engine which devotes all its profits to tree planting across the globe.

Achievements and Performance

It was agreed by the trustees in 2019 that, rather than acting solely as a direct fundraiser, KEEP, as a small charity, should focus a large part of its efforts on advocating for and brokering partnerships with larger charities and NGOs. Such partnerships should always be operating for the benefit of Kipsaina and its surrounding communities and environment.

In its fifth year of operation – the year to 30th November 2022 - KEEP carried out the following activities which were all directly aligned with the charity’s social, environmental and educational objects:

A. Social and Educational Impact

1. Further Development of Kipsaina WASH+ to include the building of two 20,000 litre water tanks in the KCWCG tree nursery.

This has allowed the Kipsaina team to gain valuable experience in ISSB water tank construction which will be applied to rainwater harvesting tanks once funds allow. It has also added to the resilience of the KCWCG tree nursery as it allows the storage of water during the dry season to enable regular watering of the tree seedlings.



2. Further Training for KCWCG Building team in Interlocking Stabilized Soil Bricks (ISSB) building techniques from Haileybury Youth Trust Uganda. The training of the KCWCG teams enabled the construction of the water tanks detailed above as well as the setting up of the team to construct the KCWCG office building described below.

3. The construction, as a pilot project, of a new building made out of ISSB to act as the KCWCG office and Community Centre in Kipsaina village.

This will act as a prototype for further community buildings including plans for a primary health centre. This building consolidates KCWCG’s activities on the tree-nursery site, replacing a smaller office that had been built ten years previously away from the tree-planting operation in the main section of the village. This building, as well as being a prototype for further community construction, will act as a centre-piece for future KCWCG activities and enhance its ability to hold large functions within the tree nursery space.



4. Continued support of the community car (Toyota Fielder), which KEEP purchased in 2020, has enabled it to be used for training, hospital visits, and tree nursery support work, including collection of seeds from women’s cooperatives and smaller-scale tree seedling transport.

5. Rotary Digital Bridges

Rotary Digital Bridges (RDB) evolved from an idea of SSF that KEEP could recruit new schools to become fundraising hubs. This has led to a positive development in the KEEP-KCWCG partnership, aligning with their joint aims of promoting educational opportunities. Initial approaches were successfully made to two schools in the town of Barnard Castle in the North of England where the KEEP charity is based. As a

result, two RDBs have been set up, the first between Barnard Castle School (where SSF teaches) and Kipsaina High School, the second between Teesdale School and St Christopher's High School for Girls near Kipsaina.

A Zoom event was organised to link Barnard Castle School with St Christopher's High School. Microsoft Office "Sway" software was also installed on the computers at St Christopher's and Kipsaina High School with a view to co-editing an interactive newsletter in the future. Similarly, relations and linkages between students at Teesdale and St Christopher's have been developing in parallel and the schools are looking to expand activities in the future.

B. Environmental Impact through Tree Planting

1. KEEP provided support and advocacy to KCWCG in delivering on a 200,000-tree planting target for Kitale Forest Block 3 as part of the Kenya Forest Service's "Adopt a Forest" project; this included a further series of high-level stakeholder Zoom meetings to ensure the vital support of Kenya Forest Service (KFS).

2. The Ecosia Deal

In September 2021, KEEP negotiated a €59,431 tree planting contract with Eco-search engine Ecosia, whose profits are channelled into tree-planting projects internationally. The initial approach to Ecosia was made by SSF in May 2021 and the final agreement was signed in Sept 2021.

Building on this achievement, KEEP supported KCWCG during 2022 in the following activities:

- Completion of an environmental and community impact assessment
- Completion of land clearance of existing eucalyptus and other exotic secondary growth focusing initially on the area around the watercourse
- New planting to maximise biodiversity, to include the creation of a biodiverse wetland
- Planting of 150,000 indigenous trees of suitable diversity produced by Kipsaina Tree Nursery
- Sustaining Kipsaina Tree Nursery to maximum production of 1 million seeds for planting in 2023

Future Plans

1. KEEP continues to work with Barnard Castle School and KCWCG to help turn Kipsaina Primary School into a flagship eco-school and sustainable agriculture training facility. This school improvement work is extending to plans for rainwater harvesting tanks in other schools local to Kipsaina (Kipsaina High School being the first beneficiary of this scheme) and in Nandi County. We hope to instigate ISSB building of rainwater harvesting in schools and classroom blocks during 2023/24 (in addition to the two tanks built this year at the KCWCG tree nursery).
2. The KCWCG tree nursery remains the single biggest potential economic driver for all the other planned activities. The intention is to extend the contract with Ecosia – hopefully enabling KCWCG to sign a 20-year agreement and thereby plan sustainable growth year on year.
3. KEEP is exploring ways in which it can help KCWCG tap into the Carbon Credit market, in particular collaborating with Nature 4 Justice and seeking to massively expand KCWCG activities to plant along riparian corridors in all twelve counties of Western Kenya.

4. KEEP is also looking to develop further international partnerships with support and advice from Thinking Philanthropy. As well as Nature 4 Justice and another large and influential NGO in the region with whom discussions have been initiated, a key partner might be Brackenhurst (based in Limuru, Kenya) with whom KEEP could potentially collaborate to obtain a Terraformation off grid tree seed bank project (see below) enabling KCWCG to manage the supply of a broad range of indigenous tree seeds for both its own use and for sale to third parties.
5. KEEP's collaborative activities in Kenya are limited by the Kenyan Government's restriction on "for profit" activities by Community Based Organisations (CBO). As KEEP intends to support enterprises that will generate profit – through activities such as tree seed sales and ISSB building - SSF, Felicity Jones (TP) and Maurice Wanjala (KCWCG) are taking active steps to create a new Kenyan Social Enterprise. Governance of this entity would be arms-length from KEEP. Maurice Wanjala and his daughter Sharon Neron Wanjala would become directors of this social enterprise, as would Paul Easton of Barnard Castle School. The constitution of the new social enterprise would stipulate that all profits generated will be channelled into initiatives consistent with the charitable objects of KEEP in Kenya.
6. *Tree-Nursery Sustainability Research*
The following areas of research initiated in 2021 have been rolled over into 2023/24. In this KEEP continues to be aided by Felicity Jones of Thinking Philanthropy. The purpose of this research is to increase the environmental and economic sustainability of KWCWG's tree nursery operations. Areas of research include:
 - i) Replacement of plastics in the tree nursery - sustainable alternatives to the poly-tubes currently used for seedling production, use of which is now tightly regulated by the Kenyan Government. See below for future plans.
 - ii) Funding and design of "tree seed banks", with a view to construction of such a facility at the Kipsaina Tree Nursery and, if successful, across new tree nursery sites at wetlands in the 12 counties of Western Kenya. A bid to Terraformation (see [Seed Bank terraformation.com](https://terraformation.com)) for a self-contained shipping container-based seed bank unit was not successful, but there are plans to jointly bid for one with Brackenhurst in 2023/24. Viable seed storage is a major challenge for any tree planting operation. Establishing such a facility would enable the supply of seeds to all KCWCG operations, as well as the option of selling surplus seeds to other growers, potentially creating a large additional income stream.
 - iii) Research into potential replacement of the hundreds of tonnes of "forest soil" required for the successful germination of indigenous tree seed (forest soil having the necessary fungal hyphae growth required for successful seed germination and seedling growth). Purchase and transport of this soil is a considerable expense to the KCWCG nursery operation as well as being environmentally degrading to the forests it is gathered from. If successful, this could become a breakthrough process, transforming tree nursery operations across East Africa.

Financial Review and Reserves Policy

In KEEP's fifth year of operation, the policy of the trustees remains to maintain a positive bank balance at all times without recourse to borrowing or usage of overdraft facilities. As a small charity the trustees seek to initiate projects only once the full estimated amount, with at least a 10% contingency buffer, has been raised and is available in the charity's CIO bank account for deployment.

Funding for projects is provided to local partners in staged payments, rather than in one go, and is conditional on them furnishing KEEP with a comprehensive breakdown of spend (including receipts for materials and services purchased) at regular intervals.

Risk Management

The trustees have attended a Charity Commission course on managing risks and maintain a risk register which is reviewed annually. In addition, the charity has a Safeguarding Policy in place which it requires all partners and contractors to sign up and adhere to. The policy was written in consultation with SAFE (Safer Activities for Everyone), a not-for-profit community interest company established in 1987 which is dedicated to raising child and adult safeguarding standards both in the UK and overseas.

KEEP has a data protection policy in line with GDPR requirements, and a Privacy Policy available on request.

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees



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Sam Forsyth
Trustee

30th September 2023



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Rubel Quader
Trustee

30th September 2023

KEEP

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS
YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2022

Period from 01 December 2021 to 30 November 2022

	2022 Unrestricted funds £	2022 Restricted funds (ISSB) £	2022 Total Funds £	2021 Total Funds £
Receipts (Donations)				
Barnard Castle School			0	8769
Barnard Castle Rotary Club		3,235	3,235	1050
Private Donations	111		111	641
Total Receipts	111	3,235	3,346	10,460
Payments				
Charitable activities - general	1,000		1,000	8,706
Charitable activities – ISSB		3,181	3,181	
Charitable activities – car purchase			0	966
Bank charges for international money transfers		84	84	174
Administration	389		389	231
Total payments	1,389	3,266	4,654	10,077
Net receipts / (payments)	-1,277	-31	-1,308	383
Cash funds b/f	2,121	0	2,121	1,738
Cash funds c/f	843	-31	813	2,121