



The African Conservation and Development Foundation

Summary of the Strategic Plan 2008-2012

ABOUT ACDEF

ACDEF is a not-for-profit international organisation headquartered in Cambridge, United Kingdom. It is the offspring of years of collective and individual thinking and consultation by a group of experienced Africans and international professionals. This group believes in the power of collective efforts in reaching regional to global targets in the area of sustainable development in Africa. With a well-established local network at all levels in Africa, ACDEF is a platform constituted of biologists, economists, development experts, environmental lawyers, conservation and development activists bonded by the common drive to overcome the daunting challenges facing Africa in reaching the UN Millennium Development Goals and tackling the current and emerging threats from climate change.

ACDEF is initially working through a network of well established like-minded organisations in Africa and will in the medium to long term establish its own programme office in each country. Based on its current wealth of experience, professional capital and identification of prominent issues related to sustainable development, ACDEF focuses its initial interventions in the Central and West Africa region.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Our Vision

An African continent where the vast arrays of renewable natural resources are efficiently and effectively used to support the wellbeing of the human population, particularly the poor and vulnerable, while ensuring the sustainability of those resources.

Our Mission

ACDEF's mission is to use holistic conservation to reduce poverty and to tackle the challenges of environmental degradation and climate change in Africa.

Our Values and Principles

Five values and principles will guide our interventions as we strive to achieve our vision and mission. At all time, we will:

- Take positive views on Africa and the people of Africa and ensure that all our interventions are led by local needs, are culturally sensitive and combine in a holistic manner the triple needs of poverty alleviation, sustained growth and environmental protection.

- Ensure that the primary beneficiaries of our work are and will remain the people of Africa and the increasingly threatened natural assets on which their livelihoods depend.
- Set realistic and achievable targets and ensure that the main beneficiaries are fully involved in the identification, planning and implementation of our interventions and also in monitoring and evaluating the impacts of such interventions on their livelihoods and on the natural environment.
- Use sound science combined with indigenous knowledge in Africa to inform and facilitate our interventions and to enhance knowledge exchange and information management.
- Work in partnership and in a clearly accountable manner with like-minded organisations and local governments, the donor community and other stakeholders in Africa and elsewhere to add value and effectiveness to our interventions.

KEY ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES

ACDEF is striving to achieve its mission through five key organisational objectives which direct the initial activities in Africa, Western Europe and North America. These include:

- 1. *Developing the organisational capacity*** – ACDEF needs to build and maintain the organisational capacity necessary to operate as an organisation capable of running the technical programmes and delivering tangible outputs and outcomes in the field, persuading the donors of its technical and managerial abilities and gaining a reputation based on sound science and participation of local people in conservation and development in Africa.
- 2. *Establishing and consolidating a network of partners*** – Through building formal strategic partnerships with like-minded organisations in Africa, Western Europe and North America, ACDEF builds on strengths already available in-country, shares experiences and learning, and builds up ACDEF's own capacity and that of its partners. ACDEF is initially working through the network of local NGOs in Africa and will, in the medium to long term establish its own country programme offices if necessary.
- 3. *Developing and implementing technical programmes in Africa*** – together with the local partners in Africa, ACDEF is identifying and establishing projects/programmes in Central and West Africa taking into consideration the current experience of the board members, their professional capital and the prominent issues and opportunities related to sustainable development, poverty alleviation and climate change in Africa. The initial programmatic goals focus around two main areas: (i) Nature and People Programme and (ii) Global Programme which is looking at issues of cross cutting nature.

- 4. *Developing and implementing a fundraising strategy*** – ACDEF as an organisation has no initial start up financial capital and most, if not all the early work needed to set the organisation afoot is carried out on a voluntary basis by the board members. Following the recent approval of the strategic direction of the organisation by the board of directors, it is now possible to develop and implement a fundraising strategy which will help ACDEF to build up its human and financial capital and move effectively towards achieving its goal.
- 5. *Developing a communication strategy*** – To achieve its aims of improving people's livelihoods and the governance of natural resources in Africa, ACDEF needs to make itself a name and in order to achieve that, the organisation has to establish a communication strategy and a medium through which it presents itself to outside audience including supporters and potential donors.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY AREAS

In the coming years, ACDEF will undertake a number of activities relating to organisational development. The aim of this is to establish ACDEF as an effective charity with the capacity to raise funds to meet its mission.

A number of activities are seen as important to develop ACDEF as a fully functional organization. ACDEF needs to assess its institutional and technical capacity vis-à-vis its agreed strategic objectives. A number of guidelines need to be developed. These include those for general administration, financial management, for voluntary work and in the establishment of an international technical advisory board. Further work will include exploring the requirements to register ACDEF as a 501 (c) (3) tax-deductible non-profit organization in the United States of America.

Partnerships are being developed with like-minded organisations in Western Europe, North America and in Central and West Africa. A communication strategy with potential partners, donors and field operations is also being developed including the organisation's website.

Two main technical programmes are proposed over the next five years to respond to the challenges and opportunities of conservation and development in Africa. These are:

1. *Nature and People Programme*

This is the largest programme of ACDEF. It seeks to bring the people to live in harmony with nature in Africa. It is built around the current issues related to the management of Africa's most precious renewable natural resource which is the forest. It also pays sufficient attention to Africa's wildlife increasingly threatened by poaching and habitat loss, particularly large mammals.

The Nature and People Programme capitalises on the market for environmental services and particularly on the current and future opportunities offered by the international carbon finance and climate change to promote the social and economic development of the marginalised human populations.

The Nature and People Programme is made up of three strong components including climate change and environmental forestry, wildlife conservation and management, and social and economic development. The climate change and environmental forestry component is further broken down into the carbon forestry and sustainable use forestry initiatives.

2. The Global Programme

The Global Programme of ACDEF focuses on cross-cutting issues to bring people to live in harmony with Nature in Africa.

ACDEF ensures that all the stakeholders are aware of the current and emerging threats to the natural environment and people livelihoods through classical environmental education and awareness raising campaigns.

This programme also produces resources and materials to inform policy and advocacy debates locally and globally while ensuring that the necessary skills are embedded locally through capacity building, training and research.

An important component of this programme is related to monitoring the impacts of our interventions on the natural environment and the livelihood of the populations. Such a monitoring system will help to refine and adapt our intervention strategy for the benefit of Nature and People in Africa.

To support the above, a fund-raising strategy is being developed. As a young organisation ACDEF initially depends on the voluntary contributions from its directors. In order to raise the programme funding, the building of strategic partnerships with established organisations is seen as a way forward. Other areas to be investigated include individual and corporate giving, lottery funds and funds from trusts and foundations.