



LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION OF OLD TOWN – MOMBASA

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Abstract

This paper explored the attitude of the local community towards NMK's conservation activity in Old Town (Mombasa) and their involvement in the process.

This study used a variety of research methods based on a longitudinal survey. The study used key informants, focus groups, and the questionnaires to collect data on the perspectives, experiences and aspirations as well as strengths of the community with regard to heritage conservation.

The research findings show that the local community's awareness and appreciation of conservation and heritage seems adequate, while, the young generation particularly shows less understanding, appreciation and interest in the heritage and its conservation.

The participation level of the community is at low level since the Conservation Project was unable to plan for and to accommodate people's participation. It has therefore remained a straight jacket and has pushed on to predetermined objectives, regardless of whether the local people are on board or not.

Future conservation work should therefore, move from specialized to integrated, from lecturing to dialogue, from modern technology to appropriate technology. More emphasis should be placed upon the potential of 'self help' initiatives, developed in collaboration with community member, than on the introduction simply of outreach programs by National parastatals like NMK.