

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE CONSERVATION OF LAMU OLD  
TOWN, WORLD HERITAGE SITE**

**BY**

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my dear parents, Mr. and Mrs Sairo Ole Nkaru Kunene, for the sacrifice and commitment towards giving each one of us education, despite our, Maasai community limited beliefs in girl child education! Their love remains unrivalled.

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To fellow classmates whom I shared with in this ride, thank you for all your constructive criticisms during class seminars, your input to my research was indispensable.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
HIA:	Heritage Impact Assessment
LOT:	Lamu Old Town
LAPSSET:	Lamu Port-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor
NMK:	National Museums of Kenya
OUV:	Outstanding Universal Value
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHS:	World Heritage Site



## ABSTRACT

*This study sought to investigate community involvement in conservation of World Heritage Sites. The study had four objectives: To identify the different types of conservation activities in Lamu Old Town; To examine ways in which the community has been involved in conservation of Lamu Old Town; To analyze the challenges the community faces in conserving Lamu Old Town and finally to identify measures to be put in place to mitigate challenges related to conservation of Lamu Old Town. The objectives were guided by the community participation theory as propounded by Arnstein's (ladder of participation) and Burns et al., (Ladder of citizen empowerment) to explain the different levels of participation and why individuals in the community must be empowered for effective participation.*

*Data was collected using individual interviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. A total of 40 individuals were identified from the Lamu Old Town, the site hosting the World Heritage status, in Lamu County and sixteen were interviewed individually. The research also conducted two Focus Group Discussions consisting of 10 participants from a primary school being the first group and the other group was a youth group comprising of 6 participants (With men, boys and girls) and conducted indepth interviews with 8 key informants. The information collected was purely qualitative and therefore was analysed thematically following the study objectives. The information has been mainly presented in verbatim quotes where necessary to amplify the voices of the individual respondents, informants and FGD participants.*

*The study found out that community members were well versed with the heritage conservation programmes but they feel that the stakeholders have not actively involved them. Secondly, the community has extensive attachment to their cultural values that limit women participation in development. In terms of the examination of how the community is involved in conservation, the study reveals that the local community is occasionally invited to participate in cultural events such as cultural festivals to harness the preservation of intangible heritage. The residents however, explained that this initiative was inadequate and ineffective.*

*The study concluded that members of the community are key in the protection of heritage since their contributions are significant in curbing existing challenges in conservation. According to the research, local communities are not being engaged actively by both the government and other agencies. Lack of empowerment was identified as the main problem hindering effective participation in the management process and lack of funds has also discouraged individual's contribution towards heritage matters. The government together with the non-governmental organizations need to approach the conservation programmes from grassroots level and focus on community involvement at all levels of management. In addition the government should budget for heritage protection and probably develop a heritage fund for its conservation.*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section provides background information of the study which discusses broad issues on cultural properties such as heritage and development, significance of World Heritage Sites (WHS), participation in conservation as well as a brief on the study site; Lamu Old Town (LOT). The second section states the problem statement while the third section provides the research questions as well as the objectives that guided the study while the last section highlights the significance of the study.

#### **1.1 Background**

The potential contribution of cultural heritage to community development is huge throughout the world. Globally, Baycan and Girard (2012: 53-56) estimate cultural industries to be worth USD 1.7 trillion, representing an estimated 7% of employment, 7% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with an estimated average annual growth rate of 10%. Besides direct economic benefits, Droste (2012) demonstrates that cultural assets such as heritage can provide other widespread and integrative benefits which may include promoting sustainable globalization. Disko (2012) views cultural heritage as a strategy for promoting human rights particularly of indigenous communities. In Ecuador, 60% of those employed by the cultural sectors were women, demonstrating the potential of cultural assets to contribute towards the empowerment of women (Disko, 2012).

According to a UNESCO convention of 1972, World Heritage Sites are selected because of their significance. WHS status can attract greater public interest in a heritage property as a result of the prestige bestowed upon them. Indeed different countries have a tendency to use them as flagship spots to advance the management of cultural heritage in general (UNESCO, 2010). The World Heritage system identifies governments as holding primary responsibility for a property. Management attainment depends on the political, social, institutional and economic context of the specific site. The shift in the heritage sector from simple physical protection to a more layered approach of management that takes into account social, economic and environmental concerns provides a basis for giving the heritage a function in the life of the community, as embodied in Article 5 of the Convention (UNESCO, 2013, <http://mwh.park-skocjanske-jame.si/eng/>).

Community involvement and stakeholder participation in conservation has recently been gaining popularity in sustainable heritage management debate. Although heritage management is now considered to be the mainstream approach for heritage conservation, it was not the case ten or twenty years ago. While people are now living in and around WHS, their role in heritage progressions and managing is expected to change considerably (UNESCO, 2013). In heritage site management, there is often a strong reliance on preservation, sometimes to the exclusion of contemporary use. The result is a tendency to remove heritage sites from the experience of the community who 'owns' the heritage. At the site level, heritage management does not always use the full range of available tools largely because of the emphasis on preservation. Case studies from rural Queensland, Australia, show that even relatively recent industrial and historical archaeology sites can be conserved and preserved to benefit both the sites and local communities (Grimwade and Carter, 2000).

Kenya has six listed locations as World Heritage Sites, namely Lake Turkana National Parks, Mt Kenya National Park, Kenya Lake system in the Great Rift Valley, Fort Jesus, Sacred Mijikenda Kaya Forest and Lamu Old Town (UNESCO, 2014). Lamu old Town is under the management of the National Museums of Kenya (NMK), a state corporation established by an Act of Parliament, the National Museums and Heritage Act, 2006 No. 6 of 2006. NMK has the mandate to oversee any activity within the property and monitors projects that would likely have an impact on the property status. The NMK therefore on behalf of the state ensures proper conservation and management of the property, including monitoring all activities necessary for the maintenance and improvement of the property.

Despite its invaluable cultural heritage including the world heritage property, Lamu County has failed to transform its rich cultural assets into a catalyst for equitable and sustainable community development. One of the key reasons for this failure is the exclusion of local communities in the management of cultural heritage sites in Lamu, particularly in decision making and benefits sharing (Disko, 2012; World Heritage Committee, 2007).

Presently, Lamu Old Town universal value is believed to be under threat following the proposed plan for development of the Lamu Port-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor (LAPSSET) Project. LAPSSET is a large scale industrial and infrastructural development project consisting of Lamu port, railway line and roads network, highway, crude oil pipeline, oil refinery, resort cities, airports and the entire necessary support infrastructure

for metropolis development. In addition, there is exploration of oil and gas. It is projected that this project will have cumulative negative effects on the natural and cultural heritage of the cultural landscape of Lamu Archipelago which might cause a permanent, negative impact on the outstanding universal value of the WHS.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

One of the greatest ironies about African heritage is that, despite being priceless, it often ranks very lowly in terms of government priority scales. Although one would expect that such priceless heritage would attract greater conservation interest and secure it from destructive dangers associated with development projects, this has certainly not been the case with the Lamu Old Town which, as stated earlier, is the site of the development of the LAPSSSET Project. Rather, Lamu Old Town's newly acquired status as a World Heritage Properties faces dangers that are associated with LAPSSSET and other challenges that encourages indiscriminate mass tourism, compromises authenticity and distorts traditional value as well as giving rise to the need for congestion management at 'honeypot'<sup>1</sup> tourist destinations.

In view of the dangers highlighted, this study examined community involvement in cultural heritage management using the case study of Lamu Old Town. The study posed community involvement as a particular form of conservation intervention that carries authenticity given its local knowledge and anchoring but that is also useful to nuancing the challenges posed by Lamu Old Town's new status and the development challenges these entail. It is hoped that this analysis, which is provided in chapter four and five together with conservation strategies demanded of WHS status will constitute insights for a holistic approach in heritage conservation at community level.

In examining community involvement in conservation of Lamu Old Town, the study analysed existing conservation activities in order to highlight their authenticity and value, the obstacles in conservation, as well as the different ways the community participates in managing the site. The study also suggests appropriate measures to sustainable conservation of the site focusing on community involvement, taking into consideration the challenges emanating from the modern developments in the region including but not restricted to

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<sup>1</sup>Honeypot (tourism): a honey pot site is a particularly popular visitor attraction which attracts tourists, and sometimes locals, in large numbers.

LAPSSET project. The findings of the study are discussed and presented in chapter four and chapter five of this research report.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The broad question that this study hopes to answer is, “How is the community involved in the conservation of Lamu Old Town?”

The specific questions that guided this study are:

- I. What are the different conservation activities within Lamu Old Town?
- II. In what ways have the community been involved in conservation of Lamu Old Town?
- III. What challenges do the community face in conserving Lamu Old Town?
- IV. What are the measures that can be put in place to mitigate challenges related to conservation of Lamu Old Town?

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The broad objective of this study was to investigate community involvement in conservation of Lamu Old Town.

The specific objectives are:

- I. To identify the different types of conservation activities in Lamu Old Town.
- II. To examine ways in which the community has been involved in conservation of Lamu Old Town.
- III. To analyse the challenges the community faces in conserving Lamu Old Town.
- IV. To identify measures that can be put in place to mitigate challenges related to conservation of Lamu Old Town.

### **1.5 Justification of the Study**

This study is motivated by the discussions around the challenge in balancing economic development projects and cultural heritage conservation. Lamu Old Town recently joined the list of five WHS in Kenya. Due to its newly acquired status, the site requires a more comprehensive management approach. Currently the new developments within and around Lamu Old Town e.g. LAPSSET project, pose several challenges to the town such as land use conflicts, environmental challenges, economic and political transformation, modernization and urbanization. In case sustainable measures are not put in place, it is expected that the outstanding value of the property will deteriorate. It is therefore imperative that the community is prepared through awareness in increased conservation measures of Lamu Old

Town WHS, to prevent and reduce the negative impacts of these challenges (Abungu *et al.*, 2014). This study therefore examines and documents the specific ways in which community engages in conservation of LOT. It particularly contributes to existing knowledge in the area to enable the generation of such awareness and perhaps inspire greater work at conservation. Subsequently, the findings of this work have consequences on cultural heritage conservation implemented in the country as whole so as to address the persistent problems facing heritage in the modern world.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

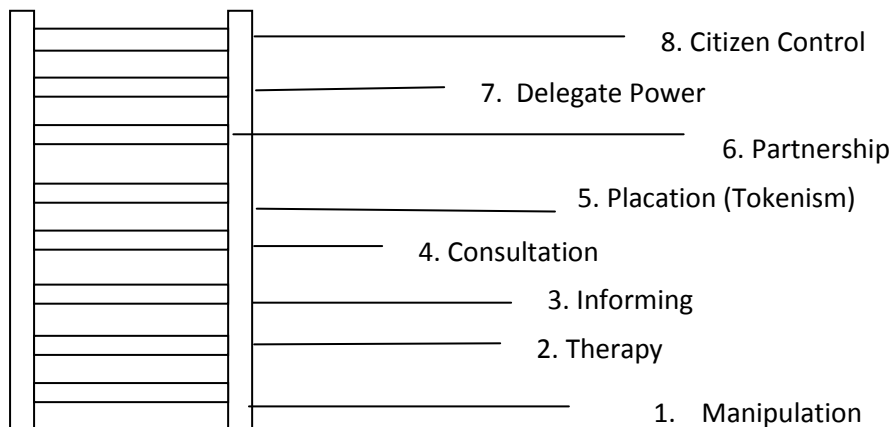
This chapter reviews both theoretical and empirical literature on community involvement and conservation of World Heritage Sites (WHS). The first section focuses on theoretical literature while the second one discusses empirical literature on conservation of WHS, community involvement in conservation as well as the importance of conservation of WHS. Also covered under this section is a conceptual framework that was developed from relevant theories to inform this study.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This section examines literature on participatory approaches in conservation of cultural heritage. There exists a vast body of literature on participation. For the past 50 years community participation has become a constant theme in development dialogues (Sanoff, 2000). Chambers (1983) is one of the authors with strong advocacy for people's participation. Based on Chambers experience in the field of community development working in various countries, he observed that the community, especially the marginal class, such as women and children, must be involved in every development process. The community must be placed as development actor, and their opinions, complaints, life experiences, hopes and their capacities for analysis must be listened to, before facilitating them to create a plan. Besides Chambers, other theorists of community participation include Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation and Burns *et al.*, (1994) ladder of citizen empowerment.

Arnstein (1969) using an analytical visualization called a 'ladder of citizen participation' demonstrated that the presence of people during a community activity might not indicate participation. She therefore provided a theory showing different levels of participation. From the 'ladder' bottom step is that of informing people while the top is citizen control. Mid-way, the degree of participation moves from mere tokenism to degrees of citizen power. The ladder consists of eight rungs in ascending order (moving from the bottom towards top)

**Figure 2.1 Ladder of Participation**



*Source: Adapted from Arnstein, 1969:224*

The specific reputation of Arnstein’s work stems from the clear recognition that there are different levels of participation. It describes the levels of partnership and citizen control. Stages under “non-participation” imply that the community is being unidirectional, manipulated and are used by powerful actors to impose their agendas. At the tokenism stage there is limited participation, the community may say something where the actors denote it as input. The community involvement will not have an influence and thus their participation will not lead to change. The true participatory stages as in the citizen power category would infer to citizens having more power to negotiate and change their status quo. Their voices are heard and responded to (<http://cagconsultants.net/resources/communities/Participation>).

Burns *et al.*, (1994) modified Arnstein’s ladder of participation and proposed a ladder of citizen power. This is more intricate than Arnstein’s ladder, with a further, more qualitative breakdown of some of the different levels. For example, a dissimilarity is drawn between ‘cynical’ and ‘genuine’ consultation, and between ‘entrusted’ and ‘independent’ citizen control.

Arnstein’s framework lays the foundation of participatory approach on which Burns and many other authors have built on and acted as the reference point. Although both frameworks are significant in this study, Burns *et al.*, (1994) ladder of citizen empowerment will be the central reference in this study. This is because empowerment of community is one of the major factors that determine local community involvement in conservation efforts. It is however imperative to note that empowerment must involve power. As observed by Stewart



and Taylor (1995), in summarizing the literature on participation and involvement there is little explicit discussion of the operation of power. Power is a positive-sum game, so that it can be achieved by some without necessarily removing it from others and that empowerment of some must involve the dilution of the power of others. This means that community is not homogeneous and, as observed by Burns *et al.*, (1994), community is not a singular concept but in reality represents a mere umbrella under which shelter a multitude of varying, competing and often conflicting interests. This study addresses ways in which community is involved in conservation of WHS. Figure 2 shows ladder of citizen empowerment.

**Figure 2. 2 Ladder of citizen empowerment**

<b>CITIZEN CONTROL</b>
12. Independent control
11. Entrusted control
<b>CITIZEN PARTICIPATION</b>
10. Delegated control
9. Partnership
8. Limited decentralised decision-making
7. Effective advisory boards
6. Genuine consultation
5. High quality information
<b>CITIZEN NON-PARTICIPATION</b>
4. Customer care
3. Poor information
2. Cynical consultation
1. Civic hype

*Source: Adapted from Burns et al., 1994:22*

Effective participation according to Wilson and Wilde (2003) should be based on a four themed framework: influence, capacity, inclusive and communication. In this study all the themes help analyze the nature of participation. The theme, influence, explains how partnership involves community in the ‘shaping’ of regeneration plans/conservation activities and in all decision making. Capacity building in terms of skills for individuals must be present to ensure quality participation (Skinner, 1995). It is the responsibility of those facilitating the participation to ensure that community capacity is deployed to support it. For

example, Chanan (1999) suggests that within a community, members will choose to or otherwise become involved at different levels in an activity project or programme and that the numbers of involved people will decrease as the levels increase thus creating a pyramid.

In summary, the framework of participation implies that, for effective participation, community must be able to influence decisions, have capacity and communication networks created by partners (Wilson and Wilde, 2003). In this study these framework enabled the researcher assess if the community has been effectively involved in the conservation of Lamu Old Town. In addition, these frameworks were relevant in this study because they enabled the researcher assess the level and ways in which the community members are involved in conservation, challenges and factors influencing their conservation efforts in Lamu Old Town.

## **2.3 Empirical Literature**

### **2.3.1 Conservation of World Heritage Sites**

Conservation of WHS entails both site protection and site management (Catsadorakis 2007). Studies by Bell (2013), Grimwade, and Carter (2000), show that conservation of WHS is guided by conservation management plans (CMP) which are unique to the specific sites. Management systems depend on the type, characteristics, needs of the property and its cultural and natural context. For instance, according to Leask and Fyall (2006: xxi – xxii), ‘no property is now inscribed on the list unless it shows evidence that it has an appropriate management plan’. Though it is clear that CMP is crucial, research shows that some of the African WHS operate either without management plans or with outdated plans or draft plans and some have it but do not implement it. Some of them lack the capacity in making such plans and cooperation from the different stakeholders. There is no literature on WHS, Lamu Old Town (LOT) CMP, except for the CMP draft document which after the field research it is now clear that it has been tabled to the county assembly for enactment, hence not active<sup>2</sup>. More discussion on this is provided on chapter four whilst reporting on findings on the third objective of this study.

The newly acquired status of the properties poses new challenges in conservation. This include unmanageable number of visitors, rise of new cultures, compromises the outstanding

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<sup>2</sup> Was replied as one of challenges in conservation of LOT by Key Informant (annexes ii)

value of the property, introduces and increases number of stakeholders, and moreover creates a need for additional conservation management (Leask and Fyall, 2006). It is also observed that it is difficult to balance tourism activity with the conservation role, often creating a tension or conflict between the usually large numbers of stakeholders involved (Shackley, 1998; Hall and Piggin, 2002). Total protection and severe restriction of visitation to WHS is a widely used management approach (Grimwade and Carter, 2000). Research done by Okech (2010), shows that Lamu Old town tourism visitation has continued to decline despite its new status which is expected to attract a large number of tourists as well as improve the state of conservation. Most of these studies do not document the challenges faced by community in conservation and there is no study yet on emerging issues that will have a possible impact on Lamu old Town. This study therefore, also, sought to document challenges faced in conservation focusing on community perspectives.

The frameworks of conservation documents have a European origin and they were introduced by the 'authorized' institutions such as UNESCO and ICOMOS to the member states (Winter, 2014). An example of such a framework which has stood the long debate of the unsuitability of the European approach is seen in Australia. In Australia, this duty of care for heritage places has manifested itself in the development of the Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 1999) to guide the conservation practitioners and the community in the development of an appropriate response to conserving a heritage place (Australia ICOMOS 1999). In Africa, for example, in Lamu Old Town in Kenya there is no sufficient literature illustrating how frameworks could take into account the community traditional knowledge and skills in the care of the heritage.

In many African Countries, cultural heritage is conserved through technical cooperation with international professional bodies, such as the International Council on Monuments and Sites and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM). Their training and capacity building workshops often fill a vacuum created by a lack of programmes in heritage conservation at African universities (Nodoro *et al.*, 2008). There is scanty literature that explains conservation that is initiated by the community and their role and place in the conservation, given that some of these heritages are their homes.

### **2.3.2 Community Participation in Conservation of WHS**

A community is a body of people inhabiting the same locality (Appiah 2006; Johnson 2000). Community, in this study will refer to all the residents of a heritage asset locale who are affected by the preservation effort, whether or not they are a culturally homogenous group and whether or not individuals have competing traditional, economic or political claims to the site. Community participation is seen as an empowerment tool which could change the face of the 'western derived' heritage management. However, case studies from Sub-Sahara Africa show that community participation policies face problems in implementation. One of the major challenges as observed by several authors include, difficulties in defining of communities and historical links with archaeological sites due to land appropriations (Ngoro and Pwiti 2001, Mumma 2009, Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008, Pwiti, 2005). The dilemma for managers here is do they work with those with ancestral links or those living close to the heritage? This study will contribute to heritage literature by focusing on LOT being a unique site and establish how community is involved in management of the site and its challenges.

Community participation in heritage management is not a homogeneous practice. This is because at any given location the situation is very different which implies that the needs are different. Case studies from Uganda, Tanzania, West Africa, South Africa and Ethiopia shows that site situations are different and unique and therefore the level of participation vary (Ngoro and Pwiti 2001). Studies carried out by Lockwood and Kothari (2006) and Ngoro (2001) show that local communities are now recognised as significant contributors to the management of heritage. The concept of community involvement is gaining thrust in the globe. 'Beyond the conservation of physical heritage itself, we now came to value the quality of life of the local communities, who are related to that heritage' (Sohyun, 2012:25-28). However, lack of empowerment is a setback in the implementation. On this issues, Chirikure et al., (2001:48-49) calls for need for active research programmes to generate information for management as well as for empowering the local communities. There is minimal research around community empowerment and heritage management.

Community can be involved in conservation and management activities in different ways depending on the type of the heritage. In China for instance, Hall and McArthur (1998) demonstrated that community involvement in conservation included, restorations, maintenance of the built heritage, management of the heritage, managing visitors, training/ involvement in conservation plan preparation, passing of skills to young generation and

participation in protection of biological and cultural diversity especially for their environment and socio benefit. Many other studies around the world, such as in Nepal, Tanzania, China and Philippines shows that community could indeed be involved in the various activities in conservation. However the plans and initiatives towards preservation are mostly blueprint of the site managers (Nyangila, 2006, Banerjee, 1970, White and Vog, 2000, Okech 2010). There is very scanty research that has been carried out in LOT since it was inscribed as WHS highlighting how community participates in management of the site.

There exists a myriad of advantages in involving of all stakeholders in conservation. Some case studies from UK and South Pacific Island of Truk, show that managers can benefit from community participation in diverse ways such as saving time and costs, smooth operations in project development, consensus, ownership and empowerment among others (Fred and Gillette, 1985, Blandford, 2006, Young *et al.*, 2013, Hans, 1999, Gakahu, 1992). Engaging local communities in conservation will indubitably contribute to sustainable site conservation and rural development (Boccardi and Duvelle 2013, Boccardi, 2012).

Nevertheless, case studies from different parts of the world such as Philippine, Mt. Kilimanjaro, and Nepal WHSs indicate that conservation managers have repeatedly failed to involve local communities in conservation or management (White and Vog, 2000, Samantha, 2012, Banerjee, 1970, Chapagain, 2008). The community is seen to be involved after either a conservation program fails or a problem emerges from a given initiative. Is this the case in LOT? Since sites are distinctive and participation is expected to diverge, this study therefore compliments existing literature by establishing the situation of community participation in management of LOT. In some areas local communities are not involved at all (Chirikure *et al.*, 2010). Most heritage legal instruments have no role for these communities which make them spectators in the study and protection of their own heritage (Okech, 2010, Ndoro *et al.*, 2008)

### **2.3.3 Importance of Conservation of WHS**

Cultural heritage conservation in this study means the way human communities protect the various pieces in their cultural make-up. It could be tangible in the form of historic sites, monuments, and landscape or intangible in the form of language, cultural beliefs, or religious interactions between them and their environment like rites and rituals (UNESCO, 2010).

There is widespread agreement that activities for the conservation and management of World Heritage properties (and heritage in general) may provide considerable social benefits, contribute to local economic development, maintain essential environmental resources, foster peace and security and promote human rights (Boccardi and Scott, 2014). Several studies carried out provide evidence of diverse significance of conservation. Case studies from New York City, shows that heritage can be an important definer of identity. In the case of Zanzibar Stone town, Tanzania it is estimated that 43% of the households with higher incomes in the Island involve themselves in tourism (Davenport, 2008; Gossling, 2003). Research shows that cultural properties contribute to environmental protection. This can be illustrated from the case whereby an entire indigenous community in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands survived the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2005 as result of heritage preservation (Boccardi, 2012, Boccardi and Duvelle, 2013).

One of the social benefits is that, evidence of the past societies provides a sense of belonging and security to modern societies and can be an anchor in a rapidly changing world (Young *et al.*, (2013). Understanding the past can also be of great help for managing the problems of the present and the future. Conservation of heritage, by increasing understanding leads to people valuing, caring and enjoying it Thurley (2005). A well-protected WHS may contribute directly to alleviating poverty and inequalities by providing basic goods and services, such as security and health, through shelter, access to clean air, water, food and other key resources (Boccardi, 2012, Okech 2010). A case study from Britain demonstrates culture and heritage (Famous buildings and monuments, castles and stately homes, and churches/cathedrals) contributes massively to tourism economy (Pedersen, 2002).

In spite of all these potentials, heritage conservation and local community are discontented. The benefits in some areas do not trickle down. According to Orbasali (2001:39-40), tourism has the potential to yield economic development, at both regional and national levels; however, the gain that penetrates to the community is usually not known, and is often immeasurable. Furthermore, international tourism is volatile and it's the main dependent source of income in the World Heritage Sites (Ashley 2000; Spenceley and Seif, 2003). Therefore, there is a need to diversify the range of tourist products to involve more of the rural poor (Orbasali 2001). There is a consensus in recent literature that tourism indeed can play a significant role in economic development though there is scanty literature from Kenya demonstrating how the benefits of the WHS can be channelled down to all the local residents.

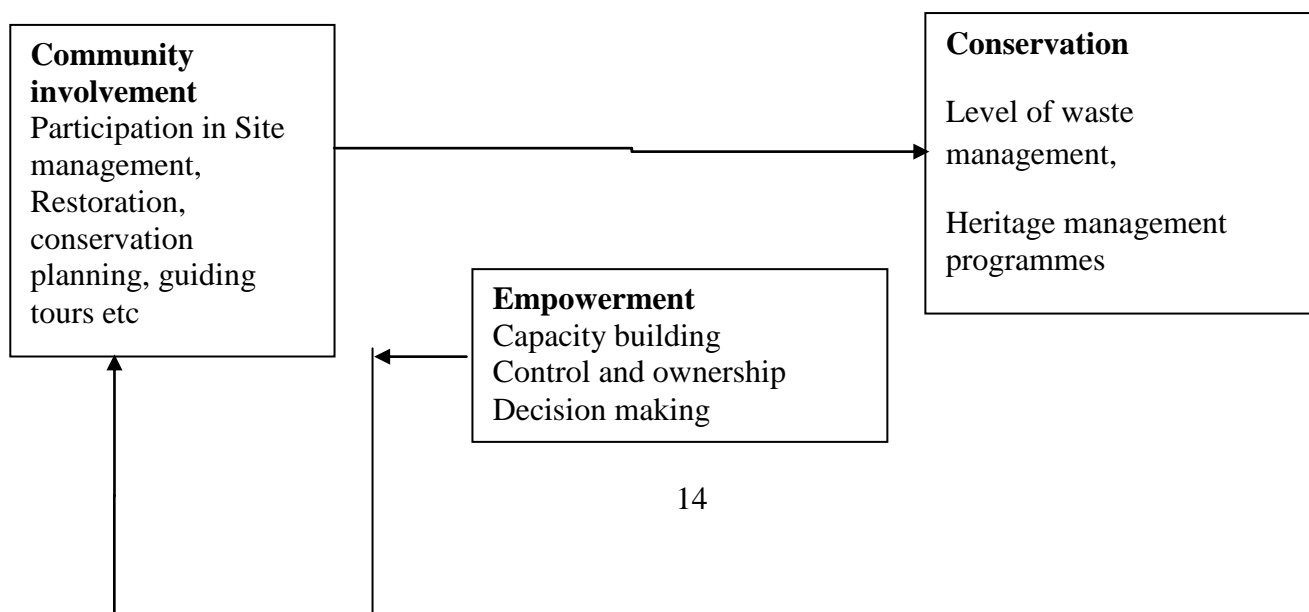
## 2.4 Conceptual Framework

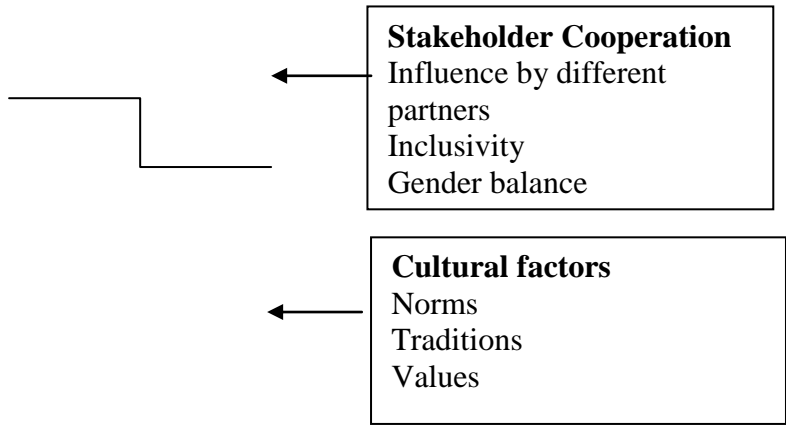
There is no doubt that engaging community effectively in conservation of their heritage will lead to sustainable protection and preservation of the property. Community can be engaged in conservation in many different ways as indicated in the first box on the upper left corner in Figure 3. These include but not limited to cleaning of the environment, restoring or maintaining the old buildings, tour guiding, providing goods and services to tourists and lodges and preparation of conservation plan. The arrow between this box and the box on the upper right corner shows that conservation depends on effective participation of the community in the management activities. The level of conservation can be assessed using economic, social and environmental indicators. These could be in the form of the level of waste management (environment indicator), heritage based programmes (social indicator), employment opportunities generated (Economic indicator). It is therefore expected that the outcome of conservation initiatives depends on community involvement.

Effective participation by community in conservation efforts is likely to be influenced by different factors as indicated by the three boxes below the two boxes on the upper left and right corners. Some of the factors are empowerment of the local community (in decision making, capacity in terms of skills, control and ownership) cooperation among stakeholders (influences, inclusivity of all groups, communication networks) and cultural factors (local values and traditions, norms).

Figure 1 therefore demonstrates the relationships between community involvement and conservation.

**Figure 1. Conceptual framework**





*Source: Author's Conceptualization*



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

After reviewing relevant theoretical opinions, describing both the dependent and independent variables and correlating them in a conceptual framework, we now explore the methodology. The methodology in any study is very vital as it links theory with practice. This part seeks to elaborate the methods that was used in acquiring a valid explanation to the research problem. It is divided into six sections. Section one sheds light on the study site. Section two discusses the research design adopted. Section three elaborates on the unit of analysis and the sampling procedure used. Section four discusses the sources of data of the study as well as the data collection methods while the fifth section elaborates on how the collected data was analysed and interpreted to provide meaning to the researcher. The last section provides the ethical issues put into consideration before the research was carried out.

#### **3.2 Research Site**

The study took place in Lamu County, coastal region of Kenya. Lamu County is one of the six counties in the coastal region of Kenya. The county has seven divisions of which Amu, the site location of WHS, is one of them with a population of approximately 10,000 (Kenya census of 2009). Lamu Old Town (WHS) is a cultural town, nominated by the Government of Kenya for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2000 and inscribed in 2001 as cultural property of outstanding universal value (OUV) under cultural criteria (ii) values/influences, (iv) typology and (vi) associations (Jokilehto *et al.*, 2008). By nominating LOT, the State Party recognized its obligations to ensure the proper conservation and management of the property, including putting into place any measures necessary for the maintenance and improvement of the Property's OUV (UNESCO 2003).

LOT's history as a port city has created the unique culture of Lamu that is intact to-date as the oldest and the best-preserved living settlement among the Swahili towns on the East African Coast. Lamu has maintained its social and cultural and continuously been inhabited for over 700 years and more than five hundred stone buildings standing within its boundaries represented almost thirty percent of the total number of structures in the town. In addition, Lamu Old Town is part and parcel of the community; the community lives in the settlements as their homes (houses over one third of Lamu's population) and indigenous culture forms part of the cultural heritage as outlined in the cultural criteria of values/influences and

associations (Ghaidan 1975, Middleton 1992). The researcher therefore managed to access the respondents easily as they are all situated round the town in close proximity. Also, the key informants were easily accessible since all of them operated within the town. Most of the people living and working in the town conversed in Swahili and a few converse in English hence there was no language barriers.

### **3.3 Study Design**

The study used qualitative approaches. Yin (1994) argues that the choice of a research strategy should be determined by the nature of the particular research question posed. The research questions in this study pointed out to a qualitative approach. For example the nature of conservation activities performed as well as the ways in which they were involved in the heritage management required detailed stories from the individual community members themselves and the key informants that were selected.

The focus of the study was a case study of the locales living within the WHS. A case study allows investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 1994). It also allows new insights to be obtained which would not emerge from survey approach. This approach was therefore very appropriate for the study as each individual informant, was analysed as a case in itself where in-depth explanatory information was obtained so as to answer the study questions.

Key informant interviews were also conducted. A key informant is a person with specialised knowledge on ones area of interest. The key informants included the Lamu Museum officials which included; curator/manager, education officer, archaeologist, conservation officer, the country executives; County Executive Committee member aka minister for tourism trade and culture, environment director, forestry official and an architect, Lamu Authority.

Two focus group discussions were also conducted. The first focus group was made of youth age 19 to 30 years and the other was made of primary school children age between 10 and 15 years. These discussions enabled the researcher determine and understand the position of conservation and the future generations stand on conservation of heritage.

In addition to primary data, secondary data sources were also utilised in the study. This information was collected from both published and unpublished materials in subject

including books, journals, reports, papers, articles and the internet. This formed the part of literature review.

### **3.4 Unit of Analysis and Sampling Technique**

The unit of analysis in this study was individuals living within and involved in conservation of LOT. The total study sample was 40 people and was sampled using purposive sampling technique. The individual informants were selected on the basis of knowledge in conservation. In this, the researcher utilised information from key informants so as to identify these people. The researcher utilised the information from the individuals to identify the youth participants for the first group discussions. One of the individual interviewed was a teacher and through him the researcher was able to identify the second group discussion made up of primary school children.

In addition, eight key informant interviews were conducted. The selection of the key informants was done purposely. The museums officials were selected based on their deep knowledge on cultural heritage and conservation, and also for being the mandated custodians of heritage. The county officials were recommended by the other key informants based also on their knowledge on heritage conservation considering the nature of their roles in conservation in their various positions in the county.

The study used the minimum sample size because of timelines, budget constraints and in addition because of the complexity nature in management of the voluminous qualitative data. The main reason for purposive sampling is to enable the researcher answer the research questions and not necessarily for intentions of making generalization. The respondents therefore were sampled based on their knowledge on conservation, gender and their involvement in conservation activities.

### **3.5 Data Sources and Collection Methods**

The data sources for the study included individuals in the community with knowledge in heritage and conservation, key informants, and focus group discussions. The individual informants and the group discussions were the major sources of data while the key informants supplemented the information gathered from the latter. These sources gave primary data. Secondary data was collected from published and unpublished materials including: books, journals, reports, papers, and newspaper articles.

Data collection methods employed in the study were qualitative. Separate in-depth interviews were conducted with some of the individual informants and the key informants. Different interview schedules were used to guide these interviews. All interviews were conducted face to face. The key informants and the focus group discussions interviews was used to grasp interviewees' views on the community involvement and conservation and to make conclusion about some variables under the subject of discussion.

The Lamu museums officials identifies as key informants were interviewed separately so as to shed light on the activities on conservation, ways community is engaged, challenges and possible interventions towards conservation. The county officials gave information regarding LOT conservation in general, the challenges facing the site, how they have dealt with those challenges and the prospects for WHS conservation through community participation.

Secondary data sources were also reviewed and they gave background information on the conservation of WHS, activities and its importance and generally ways in which community can be engaged as well challenges faced in WHS management.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

Data collected in the field was analysed using qualitative methods. Social science researchers observe that qualitative research generates extensive amounts of data and one should try to reduce it by developing categories and codes for sorting and refining that data. Therefore, the data obtained from the open-ended, in-depth interviews with the respondents pointed out earlier was developed into categories which were analysed into themes in relation to the study objectives and research questions. The present themes were characteristics of conservation activities, methods in community engagement in conservations, challenges in conservations, conservation interventions. In this analysis, community involvement was the independent variable, while conservation of WHS was the dependent variable. Table 3.1 shows data needs, the instruments, and how such data was analysed in correspondence to the specific questions.

#### **Table 3.1 Summary of Data Needs and Analysis Table**

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Data Needs</b>	<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
1. What are the different conservation activities within Lamu Old Town WHS?	List/type of activities Characteristics of conservation activities	Key informant interviews, Focus group discussions (FGD)	Qualitative: thematic analysis leading to different types of activities
2. In what ways has the community been involved in conservation of the Lamu Old Town WHS?	Ways of community involvement The different methods	Interview of community members, individual households FGD	Qualitative: thematic analysis and content analysis leading to subthemes
3. What challenges does the community face in conserving the Lamu Old Town WHS?	Kind of challenges faced by community Views on challenges in conservation	Interview of community members, individual households, key informant interview schedule, FGD	Qualitative: thematic analysis
4. What are the measures that can be put in place to mitigate the challenges related to conservation of Lamu Old Town WHS?	Measures identified to mitigate the conservation-related challenges, Conservation challenges Interventions	Community members, Key informant interview schedule, FGD	Qualitative: thematic analysis

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Before going on the field work permission was duly sought from the relevant bodies such as Ministry of Sports, Culture, and the Arts, through the National Museums of Kenya. Also, a letter of introduction from the Institute for Development Studies was obtained. In addition, introductions were made to the informants and comprehensive explanations about the importance of the research and then they were asked for their consent and permission to go ahead and conduct interviews and focus group discussions.

Confidentiality was key during the research work, thus, the research findings were not and will not be released to any other person not concerned with the study. The names of participants were also protected by the use of pseudo names.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter reports the findings of the study, according to the four objectives of the study outlined in chapter one. These objectives were:

1. To identify the different types of conservation activities in Lamu Old Town.
2. To examine ways in which the community has been involved in conservation of Lamu Old Town.
3. To analyse the challenges the community faces in conserving Lamu Old Town.
4. To identify measures to be put in place to mitigate challenges related to conservation of Lamu Old Town.

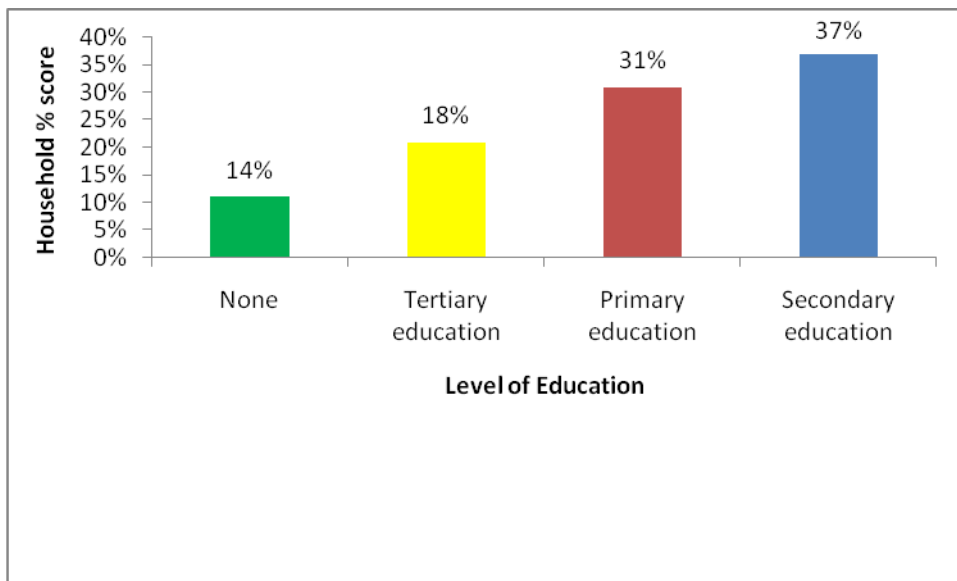
Overall, the study was designed to investigate community involvement in conservation of LOT. The first section presents the profile of the community member respondents. The subsequent sections report on the findings of the study.

#### **4.2 Socio-demographic characteristics of the study sample**

The data indicated that of the 40 community members interviewed, a majority were aged between 30 and 45 years, while a minority were in the age bracket of 46 to 65 years. The sample consisted of 29 males and 11 females and of these males 6 were boys from a primary school and out of the 11 females, 4 were girls from primary school. The females were few because women are barred by Islamic culture from active engagements outside of their homesteads. Moreover the research was conducted during the holy Islamic month (Ramadhan) whereby women are traditionally required to stay at home to prepare *iftar*, this is a meal that is taken by a Muslim after a daylong fasting.

Regarding education attainment, 14 percent of the respondents did not have any kind of formal education; those who had attained tertiary education were 18 percent. Those who had attained secondary level education accounted for 37 percent of the interviewees. Respondents who dropped at primary school level formed 31 percent as indicated in table 4.1

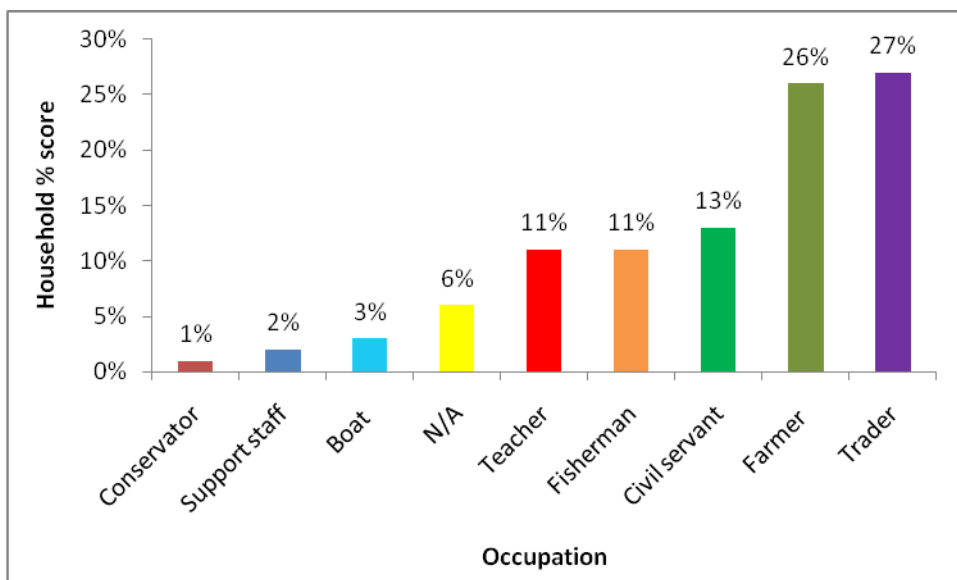
**Table 4.1: Level of Education**



Source, Field data 2015

The research established that 6 percent of the people interviewed were not employed, 27 percent of the respondents were employed in the formal sector, another 27 percent were traders, while 26 percent were farmers. Respondents who were in boat business represented 3 percent of the people interviewed while 11 percent of the respondents were fishermen as indicated in table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Employment status**



Source, Field data 2015



## **4.2 Conservation Activities**

The study established that heritage components of Lamu Old Town (LOT) include the tangible and the intangible heritage. The tangible heritage comprises of buildings, pathways, drainage, mangroves, archaeological layers and buffer zones. The conservations efforts therefore are geared towards the preservation and management of these components. Conservation mainly involves renovations or constructions which follow regulations, guideline that need to be adhered to whenever any renovation or constructions is to take place. Intangible heritage conservation entails cultural activities. In establishing the types of conservation activities around LOT, the research revealed that 75% of the respondents are aware of the different conservation activities that exist even though they are not involved in all of the activities while 25% are unaware of the meaning and the state of the WHS property even though they participate in some of the activities. Those that were not aware about conservation were mostly primary school children.

From the research it is established that the heritage conservation activities could therefore be clustered into three themes: cultural conservation, site conservation and environment conservation. These activities are however interwoven. Cultural activities are the most crucial of all because they influence the outcomes of the rest of the activities. Moreover, majority of the community members participate in conservation through cultural activities while a minority participate in site conservation activities.

### **4.2.1 Cultural Activities**

The research shows that cultural conservation plays a vital role in preservation of heritage. Studies carried out around the globe show that community members are considered as significant contributors to sustainable heritage management through their different cultural practices (Lockwood and Kothari, 2006, Ndoro, 2001 and Hall and McArthur 1998). The cultural heritage of LOT inhabitants is significant as it is one of the reasons why the town was nominated as WHS. LOT is ranked as the oldest and best-preserved living settlement among the Swahili towns of East African Coast. The inhabitants of the town call it *Amu* and from this the name of one of three dialects, *Ki-amu*, is derived. This is the indigenous language of the town but Swahili remains the widely spoken language in the town. Although the majority of the people are Swahili, there are other diverse ethnic groups who moved to settle in the areas to pursue various economic activities, nevertheless the majority of Lamu populace are Muslim.

The respondents stated that they believe Swahili language is the commonest language spoken among the diverse group of people in LOT and hence the unifying factor among the diverse group of people living in the town. Through this, much of LOT's culture is still conserved. As reported by a key informant:

*“The indigenous people call the town Amu and believe their dialects to be known as Ki-Amu. This language is however no longer widely spoken compared to Swahili. Much of Lamu's cultures therefore are still conserved because of the common language in the town. The Swahili Language has played a part in transmitting some of the Swahili traditions and practises to the diverse group of people, which in a way contributes to the conservation of the property. Lamu is the birth place of this language, which is the national language in Kenya”* (Key informant interview, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The findings revealed that cultural conservation activities are mainly realised through numerous festivals including the arguably world popular Lamu Cultural Festival and Maulid Festival that are held annually, marks the rich religious heritage in LOT, which according to some of the key informants is internationally known and is flocked by thousands of visitors every year to witness religious activities, practices and music. The festival has played a key role in conservation of the LOT. It brings visitors and pilgrims to Lamu for recitals of praise poems, music and dances, calligraphy and art exhibits, dhow and donkey races, swimming competitions among other activities. These activities contribute to the conservation of the heritage in the WHS as aptly captured by this key informant:

*“Maulid festival is one of the most celebrated festivals in this town, as it marks the birth of prophet Mohamed. The festival attracts thousands of visitors from all over the country. The month-long celebration of Maulid climaxes in a three-day festival. This festival is very important in the conservation of this property. It is during this festival that the different categories of people in the society get to display their cultural activities such as swimming, dhow building, poetry, music among others, and at the same time the young generation get to learn from the adults and the children learn from the youth, and this cycle continues for years. The community also benefit from the festival as it is an avenue for trading, exchange of ideas, goods and services”.* (Key informant interview, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Community members are the key players in the festival. From the findings, the community members cherish this festival because they get to display their cultural activities, and also use this as income making avenue from the festival as confirmed by the data from the key informants.

Therefore, the community members turn out in large numbers. During the event, they also pass the knowledge to the youth and children, as youth and women are also engaged in different activities that showcase Amu cultures. This has contributed to sustainable conservation just like in other cases provided in the reviewed literature (Boccardi and Duvelle 2013, Boccardi, 2012). During the festival both youth and children are trained in the different activities as they prepare for the competitions. After the competition, the different groups are awarded as per their performances. As way of conservation, the research revealed that most of the activities are showcased in the different museums such as the Lamu and the Swahili Museum. One of the respondents stated that:

*“Though Maulid Festival is held annually which is not enough, it has been very beneficial to us. We get to trade our goods and services to the available market created by the huge number of tourist that day, our children get to experience the beauty of traditions and well as compete and get awarded. This encourages us to preserve our heritage. We also thank the museums because most of these traditions are showcased in the museums and people get to admire and learn from there. I always look forward to this festival mostly because I participate in the dances and also get to supply my woven Kofias”* (Respondent, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

From the findings one of the best conserved cultures in the town is the music and poetry of Lamu, which is a combination of African percussion, middle-eastern and Indian music, popularly known as taarab. This is because it is practised everyday as way of life in this town. The arts play a crucial role in preserving the rich cultural fabric of Lamu society, from woodcarving and furniture making, to boat building and jewellery and from calligraphy to poetry. The tangible arts renowned in Lamu include craftsmanship such as the famous ‘Lamu doors’<sup>3</sup>, traditional dhows, wooden carvings, woven works, and much more art and craft that is unmatched in most of Kenya resulting from the centuries of trade. These traditional crafts are also displayed, traded and celebrated during Lamu Cultural Festival. Just like Maulid

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<sup>3</sup>Lamu doors found in LOT date from the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries; a few are more ancient. They were produced from the mixture of cultures that occurred on this Island. It is worth noting that one of the Lamu’s best contemporary carvers made the doors for the Kenyan Parliament Building in Nairobi and another was commissioned to carve Nairobi Hilton Hotel doors in 2003. (Key informant interview, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2015)

Celebration, the Lamu Cultural Festival is held annually but its agenda is different. This festival is held to celebrate the past and the future, and the beliefs and traditions that are the soul of the Lamu community but more important the cultural diversity in the town.

The Lamu Cultural Festival idea originated from a group of outsiders, as reported by one of the respondents:

*“The Lamu Cultural Festival, idea came from Lamu Cultural Organization group, Lamu was a beehive of activities with visitors coming by road but this changed immensely because of insecurity along the way, banditry and later the El-nino phenomena came which destroyed the infrastructure. The festival was to revitalize Lamu both economically and culturally, build the profile of Lamu, create sense of identity amongst the youth and preserve some of the old artworks e.g. leather work, ceramics work, fish traps etc.”* (Respondent, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The festival is three day event highlighting Lamu heritage in a carnival atmosphere featuring musical performances and dances, henna competitions, dhow and donkey races and traditional craft displays. Just like Maulid, it is also a tool of preserving the heritage in LOT. However, from the findings the community members only participates but not involved in its management. As alluded by one respondent:

*“The community is not involved directly, they are only invited to participate during different occasions. Museums invite the relevant person e.g. henna applicants, cooking persons, the carvers or sculptors etc. I feel like that this is not involvement enough. From my own experience, being one of the beneficiaries to attend a conference in South Africa; African commemoration of Heritage day, I noticed that community from other countries run heritage activities every day. The community members felt the sense of ownership. Here, however we are only given instructions but we want to be managers as from the planning process to the execution process because this is our festival”,* (Respondent, 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The study shows that LOT is popular for its picturesque architecture that rivals Zanzibar which has inspired many constructions works across the globe. The streets of the town as observed from this study are never much more than eight feet wide allowing for only three vehicles on the island while the rest of the residents walk or travel on donkey back. This

culture has also contributed to its preservation as a unique heritage of Lamu as a preserved living museum. As confirmed by one of the respondents:

*“In this town we only have one vehicle which belongs to the governor. Most of us use donkey or walk in our day today activities and this has helped in maintaining the streets as they have been since the 13<sup>th</sup> century. We also use donkeys for races competitions and this itself is a tourist attraction because I don’t think there is anywhere else in Kenya where donkey is the main means of transport”, (Respondent, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015)*

#### **4.2.2 Site Conservation**

LOT site conservation involves restoration/renovation, protection from vandalism, preserving the property sites such as the museums, significant streets and tour guiding. As confirmed in the existing literature, that physical aspects of site conservation are central to any management role, this was also evident in LOT (Catsadorakis 2007). The findings established that site conservation activities are mainly a National Museum of Kenya (NMK) management affair, this is because the aspects of site conservation is known to be an expensive activity. Special experts/architects are scarcely available locally and procuring external consultancy is costly. The museums therefore are responsible for the restoration of the buildings however with support from various international stakeholders such as the European settlers, who acquired the buildings from the underprivileged locals. Due the costly nature of preservation process, most of the inhabitants are unable to maintain the buildings and they end up selling them to the foreigners. Some local individuals manage to preserve those using cheap materials and in the long run deface the buildings. A Key informant expressed that:

*“Conservation of the building involves restoration activities which is very expensive the museums barely afford to maintain it. Well getting conservation, building or cultural materials was once cheap, the materials used were readily available. The materials like coral, lime, and wood/timber are all expensive, some of the materials are extinct such as teak and moreover the environmental department conserves it hence not readily available for instance Ebony has been banned and is no longer available in the market. The locals therefore end up using cheap materials and eventually change the architectural designs of the buildings”. (Key informant interview, 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

The research revealed that restoration of the buildings is done through a systematic process whereby the Museums provides oversight. A plan has to be provided to the museums by anyone interested in renovation of the buildings for approval. This according to one of the key informant is in order to manage the materials and the authentic architectural designs of the building. The architectural designs of the building is significant as it one of the factors that contributes to the WHS state. Some of the residents and institutions however do not consult or seek for guidance from the managers during such activities such as repairing the buildings. This according to the key informant is one of challenges facing restorations and preservation of the buildings. A key informant indicated that:

*“Conservation of the buildings has to be approved by the Lamu museum. Even though developers largely ignore this giving rise to defacing of the building or use of poor quality materials and therefore changing the architectural designs. Currently, this is becoming a great challenge because the number of museums staff responsible for supervision of the building is not enough”.* (Key informant interview, 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

On further probing to understand the state of restoration on the WHS, a key informant had this to say:

*“Restoration is an ongoing exercise in Lamu, though unfortunately, due to financial constrains only a small percentage of the building stock has been restored by the National Museums of Kenya. These minimal restorations have been carried out by individual house owners or by the N.M.K. Although the buildings are structurally sound, about 30% of them need restoration while 3.5% of them are in state of dilapidation”.* (Key informant interview, 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Tour guiding is also considered as one of the activities that contributes to the protection of the site. The tour guides are trained by the museums and educated of the importance of the different sites. The tour guides not only provide guiding services to tourist but also help in creating awareness on conservation of the site to both the locals and the visitors, as well as support the museums staff in protection from vandalism. As reported by one of the respondents:

*“The Museums provides us with training and we get enrolled to an education programme that runs for three months. After this, we are able to guide visitors whenever called to and also inform the community members and the foreigners of the*

*WHS conservation during different forums whenever possible*". (Respondents, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Further, information indicated that site cleaning involved unblocking the drainages, keeping the streets/pavements clean and preserved and keeping the sea front clean. The museums through different groups in the society such as youth associations, the tour guides and the women groups ensures that the site is cleaned especially after the various events in the town. Although most of these activities are carried out during environment day, some of youth groups perform them voluntarily most of the weekends as alluded by one of the respondents:

*"We come together as youth group and volunteer in the site conservation because we depend a lot on it. We clean the ocean shores, the sewage and sometimes we repair the streets as a group most of the weekends."* (Respondent, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Protection of the site from vandalism is ensured by the museums through different strategies which include community policing through the different registered community groups and the tour guides as well. Some old artefacts are usually at the risk of destruction and getting stolen, to be used for commercial purposes. Others destroy old buildings so as to expand their houses or build modern houses. This is however illegal and the museum has the mandate to prevent such happenings. A key informant stated that:

*"Site vandalism is one of the threats to conservation of this site, we have individuals that always out there to destroy some of the old buildings either for expansion or to rebuild a modern house. Some individuals are also involved in stealing the old artefacts in some buildings considered as tourist sites"*. (Key informant interview, 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

#### **4.2.3 Environment Conservation**

From the findings it is evident that environment conservation in (LOT) is fundamental in conservation of the property. Environment conservation in cultural heritage is a crucial activity as the existence of the heritage depends on it. LOT is an island and therefore the environment conservation revolves around the beaches and the shores of the ocean. The Amu people depend on the ocean for different social and economic activities, such as transportation of goods to and from the mainland, fishing, recreational activities such as swimming and boat racing amongst others. Some of the areas therefore that is considered vital to this community that depends on their conservation efforts include the water

catchment areas, the beaches and the fishing areas. All collective efforts in keeping the environment clean therefore revolve around the maintenance of these significant areas. As reported by one of the key informant:

*“There are several conservation activities on this island that relates to environment preservation. The activities revolve around maintaining the water catchment areas through protection of the sand dunes, cleaning the beaches, collecting waste around the property”* (Key informant interview, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The findings therefore show that environment conservation activities within LOT entails cleaning of the beach, which is mostly performed by youth associations, pollution control, waste management (solid, water air), tree planting, mostly managed by the environment department and protection of water catchment areas. As confirmed by one respondent during a group discussion:

*“We clean the beach, as a group most of the weekends, by collecting the wastage around it which is mostly caused by donkeys and people. We also make sure the water catchment areas are preserved by either cleaning the area as well as planting the mangrove trees in other times in conjugation with the relevant departments such as environment and museums and water departments”*(Focus Group Discussion, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Although most of the respondents do not have background training on heritage conservation, they seemed knowledgeable on the conservation process and the importance of heritage. As suggested by one of the respondents:

*“Yes I know of environment protection, I am aware of some groups like Amu Beach management Unit who clean the beach but well the place is still dirty the litter is scattered everywhere and this is mainly caused by the foreigners and kids. Children should be taught about importance of conservation of Lamu Old Town”*. (Respondent, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

According to the findings the Amu peoples traditions and cultures on making sure the environment is clean has highly contributed to the conservation environment. From the discussions held with different individuals it is however observed that this past tradition in keeping the environment clean is diminishing. One of the respondents alluded that, although this practice used to happen regularly it is now done only during some of the major events for



instance during the Lamu Cultural or Maulid festivals. The research also reveals that the population increase and culture infusion has diluted most the cultural environmental conservation practises and hence it is the main reason why the site wastage has not been managed. As one of the respondents argues during an individual interview:

*“Long time ago we used to have a week in every month set for clearing the beach because our culture and religion requires us to be clean so we the Amu use to maintain cleanliness and in that way preserve the site. However, now because of the increase in population and the presence of foreigners uncleanliness has increased because of the difference in their beliefs and traditions”*. (Respondent, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The Ministry of Environment through its department in Lamu ensures environment conservation through waste management, pollution control and tree planting on the WHS. The department organizes seminars on environment management, where different community members and community-based organizations are educated on the different activities towards management. They are as well provided with required facilities to enable the process such as nursery trees, and waste management materials. However, the community participation is limited and not many of the locals are interested in these activities. This is as alluded by one the key informant:

*“The environment department arranges for environment education programmes but the community members are reluctant to participate. There is no direct benefit in preservation/conservation and hence the locals are not willing to participate in the activities, lack of incentives, funds, minimal budgets for conservation, illiteracy level is high, some cultural; values/norms believes which affect participation of some groups in the society especially the women”*. (Key informant interview, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The research further revealed that sand dunes are the lifeline of the World Heritage Sites. The sustainability of the WHS is not only dependant on its unique architecture but also the living culture of the people that depend on the fresh water supply. The sand dunes are important as they act naturally as a membrane that separates the intrusion of saline water from the adjacent coastline into its underground. The National Museums of Kenya (NMK) therefore as the research established is responsible for the protection of the sand dunes from any form of encroachment. A key informant expressed that:

*“The sand dunes are the only membrane between sea water and fresh water and they should be conserved. Those very aquifers are the same reason that the culture emerged in the place it did, without sufficient availability of water, humans could have inhabited the Island for over 700 continuous years. The NMK is committed to ensure that this important water resource is protected and in 2009 they commissioned the Ground water resources assessment of Lamu Island along the coastal Kenya. The document that was produced explains very well to anyone who doubts the importance of the sand dunes and the negative impacts that development have upon the uptake storage of fresh water. Should any development be allowed at the dunes Lamu will not have fresh water in less than ten years”, (Key informant interview, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

#### **4.3 Ways the Community is Involved in Conservation of LOT**

Community involvement though a very crucial component of sustainable conservation (see reviewed literature) is not frequently implemented in most of the WHS (Nyangila2006, Banerjee 1970, White and Vog 2000, Okech 2010). This is not different in LOT, although the community is involved in conservation of the WHS, there are challenges facing the process. The study, for instance, revealed that the community members are not contented with the ways in which the site managers involve them in the management of the property. Some respondents from a group discussion felt that they are only spectators in the conservation efforts.

A focus group discussant voiced the following position:

*“The Museums only call us on different occasions to participate mostly during the festivals, but we are not involved in the decision making process such as management plans, projects, policy-making and implementation”. (Focus Group Discussion, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

Another stated that:

*“Those who are invited sometimes are the old, who only listen most of the time and I think they take advantage because most of us are illiterate. We don't feel that we own this heritage. (Focus Group Discussion, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

Further on the same, a key informant expressed that:

*“The managers of the WHS only invite the locals to participate in certain activities such as cultural festival where they dance, showcase their traditional displays and compete in the different fields and so on” (Key informant interview 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

Nevertheless, it is evident that the community takes part in different conservation activities of the WHS though not to their level of satisfaction. From the findings, this level of involvement falls under the themes; museums activities, cultural participation and physical site management. From the data gathered, it is noted that the majority of the respondents (50%) participate in cultural activities while the minority (18%) are involved in museum activities.

#### **4.3.1 Museum Activities**

As demonstrated by Nyangila (2006), the museums management can involve the community members in their conservation and management activities such as exhibitions/showcasing, tour guiding/visitor management and education programmes among others. The findings established that the Lamu museum in LOT provide space for the locals to showcase their heritage through exhibition and performing arts. Fifty percent of the respondents reported that they do indeed participate in heritage conservation by displaying their exhibitions in the provided space at the museums time to time while forty percent stated that did not and ten percent reported they were not aware of such arrangements.

*“We are normally called in to showcase our heritage through temporary exhibitions run and managed and conceptualized by the museum exhibition experts, these exhibitions run for almost three months.”* (Respondent, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

From the interviews it was established that out of these activities, the performing arts gets highest interested parties. This is because part of the traditions of the Coast inhabitants involves making merry through competitions in music, dances and poetry, they as well combine this activities with religious lectures, and sensitization programmes such as drug abuse. Ninety five percent of the respondents reported that they enjoy planning and participating in the performing arts, while five percent stated that they do not.

*“The space provided by the museum is very convenient space for all kind of activities, sometimes we use it as a market but most of the time it is always occupied with all sort of performances, its either some groups competing in tradition dances and music, youth challenging each in the contemporary music, poetry, the aged telling stories, public lectures especially on religious matters and sensitization programmes especially on drug abuse”.* (Respondent, 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2015)

In addition, the Lamu museum trains tour guides who not only provide tour guide services, but also assist in controlling the visitor flows to the different sites within the property. Seventy percent of the youth respondents that indeed Lamu museums involve them in the museums activities by training them in tour guiding services and in a way provide them with employment while thirty percent stated that they do not. A focus group discussant expressed that:

*“We benefit a lot from the training provided by the museums on tour guiding, because we get to utilise our skills and experience whenever we have visitors within this town. Some of us rely on this activity as the only way of generating income”.* (Focus Group Discussion, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Every year during the celebration of the International Museum Day, there is free admission to the NMK including regional Museums, aimed at encouraging the public and local communities to participate in museum activities. This has brought the museum closer to the general public through hands-on learning of different museum activities. The Lamu museum, for example, hosts an annual dhow (traditional sailing boat) race and painting competition, events that are used to explain to the public the museum's activities.

A key informant reported that:

*“We indeed involve the community members in museums activities such as providing space for them to showcase mostly heritage related activities. Most importantly, we have an international day which is celebrated globally where we allow free entrance, host competitions in different activities such as dhow racing, donkey racing and painting among others”.* (Key informant interview, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

This study moreover, found out that museums have education programmes supported by USAID where they have a fully equipped library and kids are trained from there by museums staff. According to a key informant, through the same programme the locals especially children and women, though a few benefited from scholarships. The museum however ceased providing such scholarships because of lack of funds. The key informant expressed that:

*“We have a fully equipped library and within it we have children classrooms. They get to be taught and once in a while trained on heritage issues. Long time ago the museums in conjunction with other organizations use to provide scholarships to a specific people in the society especially the women and children. Unfortunately this is now very rare because of lack of funds”.* (Key informant interview, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

### 4.3.2 Cultural activities

The cultural activities promote and contribute to preservation of the unique Swahili heritage of the Lamu Archipelago. The findings established that ninety five percent of the respondents did actively participate in conservation activities through the main cultural festivals and more also because some of the activities comprise their day to day undertakings. Five percent who did not participate all argued that they work out of the town and hence are not able to attend the festivals. These activities showcased in the different occasions especially during the festivals include woodcarving, dhow races, palm weaving, henna applications, traditional Swahili poetry, traditional dances, musical performances, handicrafts, door carving, storytelling and the highlight is the famous donkey race. Eighty percent of the women respondents participate through henna application, traditional Swahili cuisines preparations and display, traditional dances and musical performances (ngoma) while fifteen percent participate through exhibition of palm weaving and five percent Swahili poetry. One female respondent stated that:

*“Though am not involved in the festival planning, I have participated in it since it started in 2005 in the tradition food bazaar and traditional dances. We have experts in henna applications, dancers, musical performance and palm weaving. We really enjoy these festivals because we get to exchange ideas and our children get to emulate these good traditions”.* (Respondent, 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Most of the male respondents (90%) participate through door carving, dhow racing, donkey races, music and poetry while the rest participated in weaving and traditional dances. The children only participate through poetry, music and dances. A respondent expressed that:

*“Just like most men here I am engaged in activities like dhow building, display and racing, carving especially carving doors, such as the famous Lamu doors which is very common in the Island. Some of my friends only participate in the traditional dances and musical performances as you may be aware woodcarving is an art that requires skills and experience, hence not everyone can be able to deliver”.* (Respondent, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The study established that the main racing events include dhow racing, donkey racing, traditional dances and Kiswahili poetry competitions. Dhow is the primary vehicle of trade and cultural exchange in LOT. The study discovered that while the number of dhow builders has declined in other regions, the art remains vibrant in the Lamu archipelago where the boats still play a major part in daily life and livelihood. A dhow building school founded by Stromme in partnership with museums provided the youth with capacity building, training and jobs. The information further indicated that dhows range from small canoe-like known as *mashuas* to huge ocean-going *Jahazis*. As revealed by the study, dhow racing is therefore held in order to encourage and preserve the art of dhow sailing, this is because it is highly threatened by increasing availability of new engines and prefabricated boats. The information further showed that the town's finest dhows are selected to compete, and race under sail through a complicated series of buoys, combining speed with elaborate tacking and manoeuvring skills.

A key informant stated that:

*“The art of dhow sailing attracts a lot of participants because it is one of the authentic cultural activities that explains the cultural heritage of the inhabitants of Lamu. The emerging technology is a threat to the existence of this culture. Dhow racing is usually one of the highlight of the cultural ceremonies. We have a dhow building school which provides training, capacity building and jobs in the Lamu archipelago as well as helping local communities to preserve a rich cultural heritage. Moreover the process involves youth working as apprentices under an experienced traditional boat builder using old fashionable old tools and therefore keeps the traditions going”.* (Key informant interview, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The study established that one of the most popular events during any celebrations in the Island is donkey racing. The donkeys of the Lamu Island are the main land-based mode of transportation to the residents. The Island's population of around three thousand donkeys is tended to by a Donkey Sanctuary for over 25 years. Through it, the locals get education on care for donkeys and employment. A few months before the race day, donkey jockeys literally spend the entire time honing their riding skills for this event, and the rider wears his title with great pride. It became clear during research that the Swahili people of Lamu have an advantage during the racing competition, as the people use donkeys every day and so the

race is often competitive. Being a winning donkey jockey therefore requires a specific set of skills.

A respondent expressed that:

*“I enjoy donkey racing, it is one of the most competitive races of all the races. I participate in. The cultural festivals, however is the main event with very high turnover of participants. I have never won though but I am still working on my skills and hope to win some day. This event is very important to the local resident of Lamu because it not only help preserve the cultural heritage but also provides income to them through either working in the donkey sanctuary, hiring ones donkey or through the competitions”.* (Respondent, 20<sup>th</sup>, June, 2015)

In addition another key informant stated that:

*“The real highlight of every festival involves the towns’ most endearing symbol, the donkey race. The donkey is the main mode of transportation in this Island. Automobiles are not allowed on the Island so as to preserve the heritage of the WHS, which is said to be threatened by the increase of modern transportations such as vehicles, bicycles, and motorcycles. This competition is very competitive as the locals use donkeys in their day to day activities, and therefore one needs to be skilled to be donkey jockey”.* (Key informant interview, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The study found that *ngoma* competitions are placed in any centre of a social activity which makes them the premiere fora for sustaining as well as challenging dominant systems of political and moral authority. For example, spiritual leaders strategically used *ngoma* as a vehicle for mediating ethnic and religious differences, while marginalized groups such as women and slaves used performance media to express their discontent with the status quo. These cultural performances play vital role in the heritage preservation as well as significant functions such as in political and gender spaces. As expresses by one of the respondent:

*“I participate in the traditional music and dance activities, we perform as a women group. We not only perform ngoma during the festivals but also during certain ceremonies such as weddings, birth death ceremonies. The ngoma performances are however famous during the cultural festivals and its tunes brings the magic of the past alive! The ngoma has played a critical function in this society; women for instance*

*are able to voice out the issues affecting them such as gender inequality, political issues among others". (Respondent, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2015).*

Another key informant stated that:

*"The other highlight of any cultural festival in this town is the traditional dances and music performances, which have been an important expression of neighbourhood rivalries. Different groups get to perform and through their songs they voice out their concerns in the society mostly on political and gender matters. They also narrate past through the songs and inform the young generations of the significance of the heritage". (Key informant interview, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015).*

Apart from competitive ngoma, deep seated animosity among Lamu residents in the past was settled through competitions on water, land and swahili poetry competitions. The Kiswahili poetry just like the ngoma have the cultural heritage historical narratives and therefore similarly contribute to the preservation of the heritage of Lamu Archipelago. The cultural festival offers a modern sample of these time-honoured traditions against a rich backdrop of the beauty and splendour of the Lamu archipelago.

#### **4.3.3 Environment Management**

The research classified waste management activities and preservation of the mangrove forests as environment management activities. As established by this study, 80% participate in these activities voluntarily as an initiative of the various group or associations they belong while the rest collaborate with the respective government departments whenever required. The majority of the youth respondents volunteer to clean the beach, collect donkey waste to manage waste while a minority protect the fish inhabitant areas by planting the mangrove trees. A majority of the men are involved in tree planting and a minority participate in pathways cleaning (waste management). The women participate through cleaning of the environment as well as planting of trees.

Research indicated that Lamu town lacks any kind of waste disposal system. Garbage collection is solely the responsibility of the local county council, however it is apparent that the cash strapped Council has no capacity to consistently clean the town. The data shows that the lack of resources prevents the formal government run system of waste collection, and without the ability to transport garbage off of the island, they have resorted to designating



land fill sites to at least contain the waste. Pollution is caused by the hundreds of the donkeys running through the streets and raw sewage flowing into the sea.

The mangrove forests are important for both the regions fragile ecology and in addition it's a source of environmental services, economic development, cultural and social well-being of the local communities. Residents have used mangrove wood in construction for centuries and moreover the forest acts as buffers filtering most waste materials washed downstream through sediment accretion, thereby balancing sediment loss.

As expressed by a key informant:

*“Seventy five percent of all tropical commercial fish species pass part of their lives in the mangroves, which provides them with nursery grounds, shelter, and food. Mangroves protective buffer zones help shield coastlines from storms and wave action, minimizing damage to property and losses of life from hurricanes and storms. The stability that mangrove provide is essential for preventing the shoreline erosion”.* (Key informant interview, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The community therefore volunteer to plant the mangrove trees which are mostly obtained from private tree nursery or forestry department in Lamu. The information further indicated that the departments of environment and forestry involve the locals time to time in the process of environment management through planting mangrove trees. As alluded by the key informant:

*“We organize clean up, with CBO, children from schools, public tree planting, provide training, create awareness. However the turnout is usually low because there is no direct benefit in preservation/conservation and hence the locals are not willing to participate in the activities as well as some cultural; values/norms believes which affect participation of some groups in the society especially the women”.* (Key informant interview, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The information further revealed that the community participate in maintaining and cleaning the visitor pathways. A group discussant expressed that:

*“We always keep the pathways clean by collecting litter and disposing it. Most of the waste is from the donkeys and sometimes the humans. We have also held some workshops organized by the environment department on clean environment*

*awareness where we are encouraged to keep the pathways clean as they act as blockage to the sewer line. This is still not enough because some of community members dump the waste at the shorelines which is bad as well". (Focus Group Discussion, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

#### **4.4 Challenges in Conservation of LOT**

Data was sought from members of the community regarding the challenges faced in conservation of the WHS. The research results show that 50 percent of the respondents stated that illiteracy is the biggest problem, 30 percent stated that poverty is one of the influencing factors while 15 percent said that modernization is seen as factor affecting the conservation efforts another 5 percent said stakeholders conflicts affects the process. A key Informant argued that modernization, mentioned population increase and cultural diffusion as some of the components of modernization which is believed to be a limitation towards conservation efforts. Illiteracy is considered to be a challenge towards conservation, most of the respondents argued that illiteracy has led to poverty and in fact partial involvement by the relevant institutions/stakeholders, while others expressed that due to illiteracy fewer chances are provided to them to participate in decision making towards the management of the property.

##### **4.4.1 Poverty**

The research found out that conservation of heritage may seem less of a priority compared to more pressing issues such as infrastructure development or job creation. Poverty seems to mostly thrive in heritage conservation areas. The majority of the respondents argued that it is indeed the nature of management in WHS that limits the community innovations and development activities and conserving heritage does not yield enormous returns as other economic activities, while a minority argued that, it is because of lack of quality participation in the management of WHS, where through it community could get empowered and in a way be able to tackle issues of poverty. Moreover, a majority of the respondents argued that conservation of the built heritage is an expensive affair while a minority argued that Museum is to be blamed for not performing their role and hence leave them with no choice but either use their limited resources or as preferred by many sell them to the willing buyers, the foreigners. One respondent stated that:

*"There is rampant poverty here and mainly because we are restricted by the nature of WHS management in engaging in common entrepreneurship activities such as putting*

*up restaurants, recreational facilities among others. Moreover we don't get to fully participate in the management. These buildings need some special handling but the experts in this field are few and expensive. The materials like coral, lime the wood/timber are all expensive, some of the materials are extinct for example teak and well the environmental department protects and restrain its usage making them not readily available". (Respondent, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

This situation as further revealed by the data has raised mixed reaction from the local community as expressed by one of the key informant:

*"Since the nomination of Lamu Old Town as a World Heritage Site, private investors have been increasingly buying properties that after restoration are either converted to villas or private holiday houses. This trend had drawn mixed reaction from the local community. Such that there are those who believe that the presence of rich European developers in Lamu will bring in job opportunities and wealth to the local people while others of course, seethe developers as a threat to the culture and beliefs of the local people". (Respondent, 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

At the site level, heritage management does not always use the full range of available tools largely because of the emphasis on preservation (Grimwade and Carter, 2000, UNESCO, 2013). Information indicated that LOT community did not utilize the available natural resources such as the scenic idle land, and beautiful beaches because as confirmed in the literature, development is restricted and preservation is strictly observed in WHS properties. Just like any other WHS tourism becomes the main development activity. A majority of the respondents are aware of this fact and information indicated that a majority indeed depended on tourism as the only source of income. The success of tourism however depends on a set of elements including network links, attractiveness due to natural and cultural resource, and the supply of various amenities and services such as cultural displays and social services. The lack of start-up capital however, and support from the local government has limited the potential benefits of tourism. A respondent expressed that:

*"The level of poverty affects our participation in the conservation process and more also is a hindrance towards our contribution to the development of the same. When locals cannot afford materials for making products for sell to tourists or to display during the festivals, it means that conservation of intangible heritage is not sustainable. Tourism helps increase property values, wealth, jobs, incomes, and a*

*positive international balance of payments for the tourist destination and its surrounding region and nation. The local government and the museum has not provided us with neither resources nor sufficient networks for development and marketing our traditional make ups. We don't even enjoy the benefits of tourism". (Respondent, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2015).*

Another key informant stated that:

*"The public awareness on conservation of heritage is minimal. The locals are selling off in absolute their houses because of the high expense in maintenance and this affect the culture and more also because of lack of stable income. The Europeans are the main buyers of these buildings considered heritage. The museums has failed to come up with proper legislation to protect the site, we only have weak bylaws which were adopted before this heritage became a WHS". (Key informant interview, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

The key informant respondents stated that low livelihood standards in LOT area was as a result of rampant poverty. They however had varied reasons on the possible causes of the said situation. Of the ten key informants interviewed, four stated that all developments are strictly monitored in LOT area by the authorities, the community members innovations and creativity is therefore limited while the rest others argued that the government has not allocated enough funds for heritage conservation and this has hindered the utilization of the available opportunities for livelihood improvements with regard to LOT. A key informant stated that:

*"The issue of lack of funding from the government to heritage is affecting the management and most probably highly influencing operations here. The management plan is still a draft because we could not get funds for it to under-go the required processes. Most importantly funds means everything to conservation as you are now aware that conservation is an expensive affair and in addition there are no direct returns in heritage conservation and therefore the community have to be motivated to encourage them in conservation. In fact all of the outreach programmes had to be stopped for a while now because of shortage of fund. Lack of the management plan has made sponsors shy away and this has affected the management of the property, furthermore tourist turnover has reduced because of insecurity. This is situation has made the locals pay little attention in conservation because they have to search for other means of income". (Key informant interview, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2015)*

Further, another key informant noted thus:

*“The management plan exists as a draft; it has never been approved nor discussed in the public. The failure to have a management plan has affected the site in benefiting from funded programmes from UNESCO because it is mandatory for WHS to have a management plan for it to be funded in any way from the international bodies, LOT is unfortunately not enjoying this opportunity, (Key informant interview, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

#### **4.4.2 Illiteracy and Lack of Empowerment**

Capacity building in terms of skills for individuals was needed to ensure quality participation (Skinner, 1995). This is certainly demonstrated in the case of LOT where a majority of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of education is one of the major challenges in participation in the management of the heritage site. Information indicated that ninety five percent of the respondents noted that the level of illiteracy is indeed high and has contributed to poor participation, while the five percent though in agreement about illiteracy argued that lack of special training or sensitization on heritage conservation is a limiting factor in decision making. While responding to the question of involvement one group discussant voiced out that:

*“The community are not adequately involved in the management process of Lamu Old Town, take for instance in decision making, in making of conservation plans or laws, when the government was developing laws and policies there was no adequate community participation However the community is called upon to participate mainly on festivals held annually, which seems to be the only way the government think we can contribute towards conservation of the property”.* (Focus Group Discussion, 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Another key informant stated that:

*“The museums don’t involve the community adequately in decision making on management issues. When they were developing laws, legislation there was no community participation because of the perception that the community is illiterate and the complexity in policy making process but more also since public participation in policy making was not mandatory or as serious as it is now. (Key informant interview, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

The findings show that the efforts by the international bodies to conserve through the community is not successful because the programmes were deemed complicated to the residents. The conservation programmes generated from UNESCO are elite in nature and some of us find it hard to grasp immediately assuming that heritage conservation is a function of museums only. Moreover there are no direct or tangible benefits that the community can relate with from conservation hence they don't believe in the entire exercise. The study established that local community members lacked skills and adequate knowledge on WHS management. As expressed by one respondent:

*“Lack of commitment from the locals is due to the challenge of income, lack of empowerment and capacity building. Stakeholders rarely train/educate or have sensitization programmes and yet the illiteracy levels are high and not to forget that there is rampant poverty”*, (Respondent, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The data further shows the lack of empowerment seen through gender lens; respondents stated that women were less empowered than male members of LOT. All of the women interviewed did indeed note that women lag behind in matters conservation because of limitations from their local beliefs and traditions. The women interviewed were 27.5 percent of the total respondents. One of the main reasons given by the respondents was that, women were busy preparing for the celebrations of holy month of Ramadhan. Further, the study indicated that the community traditions restrained women to neither speak to strangers nor attend events without their husband consent. It is for this reason, as reported by a key informant, that the museums had a sensitization programme on women empowerment on issues conservation. The programme was however initiated by one of the staff in Lamu museum ceased to exist after she got transferred.

*“The museums has failed especially in women involvement, long time ago education officers use to go door to door to educate or even bring awareness to the locals on issues to do with conservation. That initiative is long forgotten because the pioneer is no longer with them. Nevertheless, the women are so conservatives to their cultures and so without the museum or the stakeholders support they will continue lagging behind. This is unfortunate situation as the women have so much information on the heritage and they would play a great part in transferring knowledge to their children. This would help fill in the gaps created by institutions especially on youths training. It is very sad however these women do not enjoy any involvement because of the limitations by their cultures”*. (Key informant interview, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

An interview with women group chairlady revealed that the women were not involved during the inscription and in fact in any meetings towards the management of the site. She noted thus:

*“For a long time the women were always left out during most of the meetings, especially in the management forums, I recall that a baraza of men was involved during the visit by the UNESCO mission to carry out a feasibility study and even though they have more knowledge the women are shy to strangers and also their traditions limit them in a way. We have however had meetings to educate them and try convince them to participate whenever required. I however don’t think that the stakeholders are doing much in empowering the women. It was just recently this year on April is when we participated during a second mission by UNESCO during their research on the impacts of LAPSSET to the WHS”. (Respondent, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

#### **4.4.3 Modernization**

From the findings, modern ways of interaction emerged as one of the threats to conservation of LOT. Majority of the respondents argued that cultural diffusion was the main impact of modernization which was noted to be mainly caused by the population influx and the modern developments and making it difficult to conserve intangible heritage while a minority argued that modernization has brought about new ways of survival through the development projects and the new ideas learnt from the many visitors to the WHS. One of the respondents thus expressed:

*“Since the property was made a WHS we have had several challenges such as new settlers, at the same time high number of visitors. The problem is that the foreigners have bought most of the buildings, even turning them into villas and others have been built using uncommon architectural designs and forcing the owners moving to new towns. The community members left get discouraged in conservation of the same buildings and in fact the heritage in totality given that option that their friends, families are no longer their neighbors. Worse is that the foreigners will only help in conservation of the built heritage but what about the intangible heritage? Can we really dance, sing, and compete in poetry with them? Our youth are now imitating some of the new traditions from the tourists and most of them are lazy to even engage themselves in conservation”. (Respondent, 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

The information further indicated that the community had mixed reactions towards the current modern development (specifically LAPPSET project) going on around the town. Majority argued that LAPPSET project was the best thing that ever happened since the inception of the town as WHS. Most of them stated that LAPSSET has and will indeed have an impact on the conservation but were quick to note challenges that came with it can be addressed. One respondent stated thus:

*“Yes I agree that the developments around this town will affect the conservation of the heritage as it is already evident some people are already showing no interest in the conservation activities, others have decided to sell off their houses to settle on the mainland. However, there is a way of addressing the challenges that come with it; the developments should be monitored such that probably development and heritage can coexist. Places like Europe (Rome, Greece), Yemen, Egypt, Damascus Middle East are cases where development and heritage conservation succeeded. New towns have been created using the same old architectural designs and they blend in with the old heritage and most importantly local materials will be utilized for example in our case the Lamu doors, carvings for house decorations among others”, (Respondent, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

The FGD with the youth revealed that, quite a number of them are excited about the new developments within LOT although most of them complained that they are not involved in the planning process. One of them noted:

*“Although most of us are illiterate and therefore might miss a chance in the jobs created, we are happy to have something aside of tourism. Insecurity has affected the tourism turnover, so these projects are our alternatives places for job seeking. Conservation of the heritage will obviously be challenging as it already obvious that most people are abandoning their homes and moving to the main Island to get closer to the port but I trust the government will look for a way to make the two exist together in a sustainable manner”. (Focus Group Discussion, 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2015)*

The findings however revealed that a minority argued that such project will be a threat to the conservation of the site and in that in a period of not more than ten years, the state of the WHS will be endangered and might cease being a WHS. Most of them expressed that the modern developments relieved them from the flourishing poverty in the society and as a



result heritage preservation interest by the residents is diminishing as well as cultures being influenced.

*“The current development just came the right time when poverty in the society is no longer bearable as it not only made the community change their mind in heritage preservation but also forced some of the residents selling their homes to foreigners as well as divide families. This is a threat to conservation because commonness in society makes it easier for us to achieve a common goal because of common language. The youth have been carried away as well and are struggling with westernization from language, dressing to general behavior. They now prefer idling around awaiting for the employment from the projects, while others no longer interested in volunteering in conservation activities, they prefer hanging out with the Europeans and most prefer being beach boys, where they hide bad behaviors such as the use of drugs”.* (Respondent, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Another key informant noted that:

*“Modernization/urbanization/technology is the biggest challenge, there is competition between our tradition and the technology and technology seems to be taking the front seat especially with regard to our youths, it also looks like conservation efforts are turning out to be futile as a result. For example some of the common change we see is; swimming using a bikini instead of sarong/long clothe, or the use of dhow boat instead of speed boat. I see the kids forgetting everyday about the traditions and our culture”.* (Key informant interview, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

#### **4.4.4 Stakeholder’s Conflict**

There is usually a large number of stakeholders involved in conservation of WHS and often it is difficult to manage such properties, without creating tension or conflict between the stakeholders involved (Shackley, 1998; Hall and Piggin, 2002). The study established that LOT has quite a number of stakeholders namely, National Museums of Kenya which gives oversight over the property through its regional museum, Lamu Museum, the County government which after devolution now has a unit concerned with culture and heritage of the County, as well as other departments such as forestry, environment and fishery. The policies and development plans of each institution sometimes conflict with the management conservation plan. The information further revealed that the same tension has affected the development of the conservation management plan. As stated by one of the key informant:

*“There is conflict of interest in the various departments in the County but especially between the museum and the different departments. The conservation management plan for LOT is still a draft because partly the stakeholders are not in agreement on some the provisions and guidelines. Moreover, some of the institutions do not oblige to the conservation by- laws for instance before any construction or development within the town one is required to seek for approval form the conservation department in the museums but most of the departments don’t follow such procedures. For example currently we have a case where a hospital was just build without conservation consultation and doesn’t blend with the architecture around the area and therefore it has defaced the heritage. This influences the community efforts in adhering to the conservation guidelines”.* (Key informant interview, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The stakeholder’s conflict has not only affected the local community but the international bodies concerned with conservations. Most of the respondents argued that the different institutions on the Island have different goals and sometimes agendas that do not go hand in hand. They also noted that they have as a result experienced other challenges rekindled by the conflicts and to a larger extend has limited their involvement in the heritage management process. One of them expressed thus:

*“You find that different institution for example the County government and Museum have different agendas and roles with regard to conservation of LOT. The County government role is mostly development and growth oriented while the Museum goal is preservation of LOT heritage. Therefore we are left confused because one will be insisting of creations and innovation using the new technology and the other will be emphasising on usage of old techniques. During the festivals the county aim is to use heritage as an economic resource while museum interest is to use it as a cultural resource. These conflicts really have affected us even further, the county uses some individuals in pushing their interest, and these get to benefit further while the discriminated lot suffers”.* (Respondent, 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

A key informant noted that;

*“The conflicts between the stakeholders have made potential sponsors including the international heritage conservation bodies shy off from supporting the course. The county government have not mobilised funds towards conservation instead they have enabled the spread of corruption and discrimination based on political lines. The*

*current situation is that there is tension between the county government and the NMK because unfortunately WHS are not devolved and therefore the management of the property is mainly overseen by the national government". (Key informant interview, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

#### **4.5 Interventions**

Data was sought from respondents regarding their recommendations for improving participation and management of the WHS. The data revealed that 50 percent of the respondents thought that they should be actively involved in the process, 5 percent stated that they should be provided with heritage scholarships or bursaries by county or museums, while another 5 percent said they just wanted to be trained and educated about it. Such key informants believed that it did not matter how they get the knowledge because their main intention was to build their capacity as well as get empowered. However the data revealed that five percent of the respondents thought that general education was not helpful and that specialization on heritage should be the emphasis.

*"Quality participation is very crucial but this will only be possible through education. Education is key to our people, the illiteracy level is high and more also those who have specialized in heritage preservation are few probably that's why we have the museum understaffed. Some of them don't understand why there is such emphasis on conservation because they have not felt the benefits, the rampant poverty tells it all. With education people get empowered and with it poverty is reduced". (Key informant interview, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2015)*

The information further indicated that 5 percent of the respondents thought that modernization can go along with heritage conservation if the community conservation initiatives are inculcated in the main processes of conservation, while another 5 percent thought that the county and the museums should be responsible for poverty reduction and, therefore, they should be sensitized and empowered in order to enable to share in the economic benefits of tourism and more also to foster responsibility and sense of ownership. Conversely, 5 percent of the informants thought that non-governmental organizations should sensitize the members of the community on the benefits of conservation of heritage as voiced below:

*"Modernization can go hand in hand with heritage preservation, the government should provide incentives to us for preservation and that way we will not get swayed*

*by the lucrative benefits of modernization. The community must feel the benefits of conservation and therefore the government and the museums must provide support to the locals and provide alternative sources of income, but also the tourism's returns must be shared with the members of community. When there is empowerment and sensitization, definitely there will be a sense of ownership and most importantly will enable us to curb the other related challenges such as poverty, illiteracy and participation in general". (Respondent, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

Another respondent noted that:

*"Heritage should be turned into an asset by creating income generating activities for example lodges or restaurants or recreation facilities in the idle lands to reduce the poverty. Effective conservation of heritage resources not only helps in preserving and safeguarding the resources, but also in revitalizing local economies, and in bringing about a sense of identity, pride and belonging to residents". (Respondent, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).*

The data further revealed that five percent thought that the women should be empowered more and educated on even though it is against their cultures while another 5 percent said that they preferred a local community-initiated heritage conservation programme. About 5 percent of the respondents thought that for community-initiated heritage conservation to work effectively, key leaders from all genders should be fully sensitized regarding both participation and inclusion in heritage conservation.

*"Inviting community members to participate in museum or local government organized events is not the best way to approach community participation in conservation. I would prefer that the community members are tasked in developing a programme for themselves but of course liaising with the different stakeholders. That way all genders will have to play their roles and therefore all community members are all included, however the women need a special programme of empowering them because for long the cultures have disadvantaged them". (Respondent, 17<sup>th</sup>, June, 2015).*

Another key informant stated that:

*"Women have rich knowledge on heritage conservation, unfortunately the only time they are seen is during the planned cultural festivals. The women, therefore should be educated, empowered and urged to participate in the process and probably the*

*institutions should develop a special programme for them as well as encourage them to develop their own initiatives towards the organization of cultural events”*. (Key informant interview, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

The research sought information about whether the institutions-initiative way of conservation was an effective way or not. Sixty five percent of the respondents stated that it was not and that the conservation activities especially the tangible heritage such as through cultural festivals should be initiated and implemented at the grassroots level. The data further indicated that heritage conservation is complex such as preservation of built heritage; therefore, 35 percent thought that conservation activities should be completely a responsibility of the relevant institutions.

On the same note a female respondent stated that:

*“Our people should be allowed to organize and plan for the cultural activities without interference by outsiders, maybe this will change the mindset of members of the community towards preservation of the heritage”*. (Respondent, 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

Another focus group discussant stated that:

*“I think heritage conservation should be included in the curriculum probably from primary level because the young generation is not aware of their heritage and they are the leaders of tomorrow. Nevertheless, the youth should be empowered more by either training them or creating jobs for them and specific beneficial roles in the management. This will not only improve their living, but will foster responsibility and enable them to focus in the participation process”*. (Focus Group Discussion, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2015).

From the research, it was also evident that various institutions provided initiatives in curbing the challenges facing conservation but these initiatives lacked community involvements. Therefore the problems faced are largely for the lack of community initiatives. The community members however showed great interest in management of the heritage site. However, they lacked empowerment. This came out strongly as the community hindrance to effective participation. Majority of the respondents exhibited lack of knowledge, capacity, and influence in world heritage matters, therefore showing lack of empowerment (see review literature; ladder of empowerment *Burns et al., 1994*).

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **1.1 Summary**

The study set out to examine community involvement in conservation of the World Heritage Site in Lamu County. The research objectives were achieved through undertaking qualitative research in Lamu Old Town. The members of the community exhibited knowledge and insights into the subject matter. They also stated that they do indeed participate in the conservation activities within LOT although not to their satisfaction. They also expressed willingness to be fully part of the conservation process given proper involvement strategy. The community members cited different stakeholders as key to adequate participation. The museum was largely mentioned as a body that the community members wished could provide an outreach program regarding conservation of the World Heritage Site.

Members of the community to a large extent blamed the government and mainly museum for the poor state of conservation of the property and embraced community participation with an emphasis community empowerment; others would rather have the community initiate programmes towards conservation and be implemented, a small percentage thought conservation is a complex subject and the community should be guided at all times.

The findings revealed that low living standard was also a factor hindering effective participation towards conservation of the WHS. Focus group discussants expressed that the focus in the community is to search for other sources of income, and to some extent many have sold their houses to foreigners and have settled elsewhere. Therefore they do not prioritise on preservation of the heritage. The new developments as argued by a majority of the residents, will have both positive and negative impact to the state of conservation. However they all emphasised that with a sustainable strategy modern development and heritage can thrive together.

#### **5.2 Conclusions**

Members of the community are well versed with the different conservation activities that happen in Lamu World heritage Site. This is key since community input is important in the eventual contribution towards interventions on the emerging challenges facing management of the site. However, the community is not being engaged as effectively as they would have wished by both the government and other agencies as it was evident that they were mostly

involved in the annual cultural activities such as The Maulid Festival and the Lamu Cultural Festival, and not in the daily conservation activities of LOT. The roles of the different groups in the community need to be acknowledged and harnessed in order for an attitudinal change and eventual quality participation in the conservation activities in LOT conservation. The community will effectively participate in the conservation activities within the WHS if they are educated and empowered.

There are several challenges facing the community in conservation of the WHS. However from the study, the main problem is lack of empowerment. The study reached this conclusion through examining the factors provided by Burns and *et al* (1994), in their ladder of empowerment. The community members demonstrated lack of knowledge and capacity to influence the decision making process. The study suggests capacity building in terms of providing the relevant skills to the community members to ensure quality participation.

The women in this community face a major challenge in trying to conserve LOT, this is because of their role as nurturers, they are normally required to stay at home and take care of the homestead. Culture is dynamic and therefore the position of women in society is crucial for heritage conservation. The programmes used in sensitization or training can be developed by the local stakeholders, for ease of adoption by the community members. Similarly, conservation programmes may be easily accepted if community is considered during their inception, as opposed to the blueprints plans which are rigid in nature, using complex language, therefore making it hard for illiterate community members to understand what the programme is all about. This has made it difficult for the community to fully embrace participation in management of the site.

The success of a heritage conservation strategy largely depends on the strength of its links to the local economy. This linking will be important for the longer-term sustainability of the heritage programme and of the asset itself. It is therefore important that alternative source of income be developed but most importantly heritage must be turned into an economic resource, to reduce the rampant poverty.

Moreover, quality participation of the members of the community should be seen as the key remedy to the challenges emerging from the modern developments around the WHS. The participation of local communities in the management of World Heritage is seen as one way

of empowering local communities and equipping them to tackle issues of extreme poverty with their own communities and most importantly foster sense of ownership, which has a positive effect on conservation.

Lastly there are many stakeholders in heritage conservation and their interests must be balanced without privileging one group over another. Thus, there is need for compromises that allow controlled development to coexist alongside heritage protection. The government should allocate funds for heritage conservation, probably develop a Heritage Lottery Fund as it is the case in United Kingdom. Governments and professional associations should enforce high standards of practice and work with other stakeholders to ensure that the public good that is heritage is sustainably protected for future generation come. Most importantly the community inclusion must be the center of focus in all the process and activities towards sustainable heritage conservation.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

This study recommends further research on the same topic using the other World Heritage Sites as case studies. However, from this research there is a need to develop a quality participation strategy of the community members to enable effective participation in the management of the WHS.

Illiteracy, poverty and to a larger extend lack of capacity building and empowerment have affected the local residents and reduced effective participation. A majority of the inhabitants have shifted their focus from heritage preservation to income generation activities. Therefore, the heritage is threatened, as the local community who are the main custodian of heritage are under pressure to redeem themselves from the rampant poverty. The study therefore suggests that the government needs to ensure the basic needs are met as well as promote quality participation in the area.

From the study, local residents complained that the government treats them unfairly, expecting them to protect a site that does not feed their families nor educate their children, making it difficult to believe the significance of their home being a WHS. For example the museums which represents the government is seen to have failed in empowering the community and only invite them to participate in cultural events held annually, which according the locals is not enough. The festivals create platforms for networking and



marketing of the community traditional outputs. This channel has enabled them earn a living, but they expressed that, it is unfortunate that this only happens once a year. A healthy and peaceful community will not only live in harmony but will be responsible in protection of their settlement.

The study also recommends the promotion of heritage protection, whilst growing its economy through the development projects. Many parents cited the challenge of convincing their youth to adopt conservation practice, while discouraging of the modern technology in such an area where urbanization is hastily spreading. This is because modern developments are offering an alternative source of living. There are lamentations that the young generation will get lost in the midst of the process. This problem can only be solved by empowering, creating source of income, education and primarily poverty alleviation in the town. In addition, the study established from the FGD with primary school children that they are not conversant with matters heritage conservation and have no knowledge on WHS. Therefore, the study recommends the inclusion of heritage studies in the primary level curriculum.

The women in local residents should be encouraged to participate in every stage of management. The study revealed that they are hindered by the community norms, beliefs and traditions in participation in the conservation of the heritage, even though they possess rich knowledge on the same. The local government therefore should come up with a sustainable programme for women empowerment. They need to do an evaluation of their strength and weakness and know where their great edge is. In addition, the women can also be engaged in income generating activities as the study shows they are the pillars of their households. Therefore, this study recommends women empowerment for quality participation in heritage conservation.

Creativity came out as a considerable driver of innovation in heritage conservation. In addition, it emerged that there was a problem of skills in the activities contributing to heritage conservation. Creativity in this sector can be nurtured and transferred through training and knowledge accusation from the experienced fellows in such institutions. This study therefore recommends the establishment of such institutions.

Lastly, heritage protection is an expensive affair. This is an issue that was also raised by quite a number of members of the community and the heritage practitioners. The different

stakeholders are therefore increasingly finding it difficult to manage and preserve the property. Therefore, the government needs to develop and implement a heritage fund to alleviate the menace.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Case Study Interview Schedules

Hello my name is Monicah, a student researcher from the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Nairobi. I am conducting an academic study on **Community Involvement in the Conservation of Lamu Old Town WHS** as a fulfilment of the requirements for an award of degree Master of Arts in Development Studies. Your participation in this study is voluntary and all the information provided shall remain confidential and used for purposes of this research only.

#### A. INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

1. Individual information: age, gender, marital status, total household no., highest level of education, occupation.
2. Are you aware of Lamu Old Town (LOT) status as a World Heritage Site?
3. What are some of the conservation activities of LOT?
4. Who are the main actors in conservation of LOT?
5. Are you given opportunities to be involved in conservation and management of the site? e.g. tour guiding, management plans, project planning, restoration, maintenance
6. In your view, have the actors adequately involved the community in management and conservation of the WHS?
7. Have you ever been involved in the conservation activities? If yes, how were you involved? If No, Why?
8. When was the last time you were involved in conservation of Lamu Old Town? In what ways were you involved? How often do you get involved in conservation efforts?
9. Do you experience any challenge in conservation and management of the site, if yes name them?
10. In your opinion do you think that the developments around LOT might affect its status? If Yes, how?
11. In your opinion what can be do done to address these problems?

## **B. FOCUS GROUP**

1. Basic bio data of the FGD participants: age, gender, education, occupation
2. What are some of the conservation activities you are aware of in LOT?
3. How is the community involved in the conservation activities?
4. In your opinion is the community fully involved in conservation of the old town?
5. Are there problems faced by community in conservation? If yes, what are the causes of the problems?
6. Are you aware of the actors in managing and conserving the WHS?
7. In your view, have the actors adequately involved the community in management and conservation of the WHS?
8. What is your perception of the conservation situation before and after the actors involved the community in the conservation interventions?
9. In your view were the interventions adequate?
10. In your view are the development projects around LOT have an impact on the conservation of the site? If yes, what are the possible impacts?
11. How did the community cope with change and developments in the past? receptive or not
12. Are there signs of fear among the community for negative impacts of the LAPSSET development?
13. In your view what can be done to address the challenges facing the site?

## **C. KEY INFORMANTS**

1. Basic bio data of the KI: age, gender, education, occupation
2. What are the different conservation activities in LOT?
3. What is the overall conservation situation of LOT?
4. How can the community be involved in conservation of LOT?
5. Does the cultural heritage policy allow for community participation in conservation?
6. What opportunities do community members have, to become involved in heritage management?
7. What are some of the challenges faced by community in conservation efforts in LOT?
8. What are the interventions in conservation? Are they sustainable?
9. Who are the main actors in conservation of LOT and what role do they play?
10. What are the challenges that you have encountered in conserving the site?
11. What measures can be put in place to mitigate such challenges?