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**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN MANAGEMENT OF THE
CULTURAL HERITAGE: A CASE STUDY OF GEDE HERITAGE
SITE IN KENYA**

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List of Abbreviations

GNM Gede National Monument

LC local community

NMK National Museums of Kenya

NMMZ National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe

PMDA Programme for Museum Development in Africa

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Asante Sana

Abstract

The focus of this study was on determining whether the local community around Gede National Monument is involved in the management of the cultural heritage. Since the attainment of independence, many African countries have received overwhelming response from communities to have a stake in the management of their cultural heritage. The main objective of this study was to explore ways in which the local community can be incorporated in the management of the Gede National Monument. Specifically we wanted to find out how local community involvement can enhance the management of the monument, and explore ways in which indigenous knowledge systems can be incorporated in conservation of the monument. The subjects of the study were the community living around Gede National Monument. The study was qualitative in nature and semi-structured interviews and key informants were used to collect data. The study established that there is absolutely no local community involvement at Gede Monument. One of the main reasons for this is that the Antiquities and Monument Acts, which is used as the legal framework by NMK, does not include community participation. There is also mistrust between NMK management and the local community at Gede Monument. As a result of these findings, the study recommends that NMK should revise or come up with a new legislation that clearly incorporates community involvement in its management activities. NMK should ensure that communities are involved in all stages, right from the time of project design through evaluation.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Since the attainment of independence, many countries in Africa have received an overwhelming response from communities to have a hand in the management of their cultural heritage sites. This is so because before independence cultural heritage sites were a no-go area for indigenous Africans, as these areas were a preserve of the white minority researchers and holidaymakers. With the coming of independence communities are now demanding a share in the management of their historical sites. However, although much has been said about the community involvement in the management of sites, very little has been documented. This study has put pen to paper the subject of community involvement in the management of sites as observed from the field case study of Gede National Monument in Malindi District, Kenya.

In this study, the term community involvement refers to empowering the community, so that they can participate effectively in taking care of their heritage. Community involvement also has to do with actions that are taken by the community to ensure the long-term conservation of the heritage. The term heritage management is used to mean all actions that are taken to ensure the conservation of the heritage. These include management policy, restorations, community needs, voluntary services and many other actions (Ndoro 1997). The value a monument has and the public perception are also continuously changing with time. Thus, community involvement in management of sites should be reviewed considering the changing values. The National Museums of Kenya have the statutory obligation to provide for the conservation of the cultural heritage that is of value and interest. The legal component in the management of the heritage in Kenya, as seen through the Antiquities and Monuments Act, plays very little part in involving the local communities. Terms of reference for involvement are not clearly spelt out apart from nominating a community representative in local boards.

1.2 Research problem

A lot of different and conflicting concepts have and are still being used in the management of the immovable cultural heritage in different countries. One school of thought is of the opinion that communities should be part of and play an integral role in heritage management if the heritage is to survive as it had done before. Divorcing communities from managing their cultural heritage sites is tantamount to destroying heritage as this leaves the heritage exposed.

There has been vandalism to cultural sites in some areas, for example, by cutting down trees for firewood, poaching and causing bush fires. These have an indirect effect on the physical structures of the heritage as well as actual damage of the physical structure of the heritage. I would like to believe that if communities are given the chance to express their values, indigenous knowledge can be incorporated and an amicable way to manage sites could be formulated. Another dimension to management of the heritage is whether communities should be involved in conservation, for example, physical reconstruction of the site. If the answer is yes, then how far should the communities be involved? Kiethega (1995) noted that it is important to reflect on the community's culture, in order to come up with programmes for the management of sites and monuments. In the same light, Konare states that if heritage managers are to succeed in involving communities, they must be open to traditional knowledge, the knowledge of the people, of notables, men of culture (Konare, 1995). A study was carried out on one of the sites in Kenya to find out how communities can be involved in managing the cultural heritage. The question addressed during the study was whether community involvement would enhance proper management of the cultural heritage and ways in which traditional methods could be used together with modern methods in conservation of the heritage.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 Broad Objective

- Explore ways in which the local community can be incorporated into the management of the Gede heritage site.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- Find out how involvement of the local community can enhance the management of the Gede heritage site.
- Explore ways in which indigenous knowledge systems can be incorporated into the management of Gede heritage site.

1.4 Rationale

The research findings will be helpful to heritage institutions in their planning, and formulating policies and proper management directed towards combating conservation problems facing cultural heritage and community involvement in the management of heritage. Heritage institutions could also use the findings at this time when institutions are faced with financial difficulties. It is envisaged that the study will compliment the efforts of Heritage institutions towards eradicating problems and will also make recommendation as to how the conflicts could be eradicated or minimized.

1.5 Scope and limitations

This research covered the extent to which the local community around Gede National Monument is involved in the management of the cultural heritage. This was done by looking at the following variables: utilization, management, interaction, contribution, participation and conflicts between the local community and the Gede National Monument Heritage managers. Current NMK management structures were also investigated as they provide the policy and legal framework governing museums in Kenya. The issue of incorporating Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the conservation management of the GNM was not fully explored due to resource limitations. The Kipepeo Butterfly Project could have been covered had it been under GNM management.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature review

2.1 Introduction

Many communities have been sidelined in the running of museums and activities of cultural heritage institutions. A number of reasons have been given for this scenario. In view of this development community involvement has taken centre stage in the field of cultural heritage management. Some factors can be attributed to this change: cultural heritage institutions were elitist in the past hence they could not consider working with local communities. Presently, some communities are demanding a say in the running of their cultural heritage, bearing in mind that traditionally some of the gazetted monuments were under the custody of local communities and not state property. Finally, development in museology shows that the original mandate of museums is changing and there is need to expand supporters and audience. There are many examples of community involvement models and how this can be enhanced within cultural heritage management and this chapter is focusing on some of the examples.

2.2 Literature Review

The concept of community involvement is gaining momentum in every sphere of human development such as in a wide range of professional and political contexts, academic disciplines and activist movements. Heritage institutions are not spared either in this development. Before I look at the issue of community involvement, it is prudent to look briefly at the reason(s) why communities were excluded in the management of the cultural heritage. According to Ndoro, the transfer to state ownership of much of the cultural or archaeological resources through designation also resulted in displacement of local people and disempowerment in regard to control and access to cultural resource utilization and management (Ndoro, 2001a). The transfer was from communally based ownership to central government control systems. The taking over or gazetting of cultural property to state control means that local communities do not have legal

access to sites and in Africa the idea of state ownership was done through the process of 'modernisation' during the colonial period. Unless the legal framework changes and communities are given the chance to have their inputs in the formulation of new legislation, full community participation will remain a pipe dream for many African institutions.

Heritage institutions are limited by perceptions that they control knowledge and expertise in the management of the cultural heritage. In this regard they are seen as elitist institutions. Contrary to this idea of a museum being seen as an elitist institution, most contemporary museums aspire to become an integral part of their community (De Chiara and Grosbie, 1990). Such a notion leads to the exclusion of other groups interested in managing the same resources. For heritage institutions to succeed in involving communities, this must be done through comprehensive, flexible organizations to community relationship, not I-know-all partnership. To build this relationship, heritage managers need to acknowledge and value the assets of community ideas, networks, different financial resources, influence, credibility, knowledge, leverage, potential volunteers and employees so that reciprocity and mutual understanding will develop. This process helps to close the gap between the community and heritage managers. Where sites are only of significance to specific sub-groups, responsibility for management should be given to specific communities. In this case, the National Museums of Kenya or any other heritage institution could assist by providing general professional guidelines. While heritage institutions have considerable strengths in aspects of heritage management, there are other aspects where local capacities need to be developed (Collet, 1988)

So much has been written and spoken about community involvement in museums and monuments activities that Heritage managers are concerned about living in harmony with communities around sites and monuments. In some cases, the nature of community involvement conflicts with current professional heritage management practices. At the same time, the guiding philosophy of heritage management is that the local people should not be alienated from their past (Pwiti, 1996). To do

this, heritage managers end up drawing some programmes which, to a large extent, try to economically empower these communities. Should communities be involved in direct conservation of sites, e.g., restoration process and how can this be done without prejudicing ethics? Community involvement in preservation is not usually sought. The excuse given is that this is a highly technical subject, best left to technocrats who know better (Ndoro, 2001b). The expected result of community involvement should be twofold, that is, to benefit the society and the museum itself. Community needs usually comprise intended activities, especially on how to generate income or benefit financially from monuments and facilities necessary to go with these needs. It is generally believed among museum professionals in Africa that the cultural heritage is communally owned, yet it needs individuals to actively participate in its conservation. Many of Africa's cultural heritage sites have been vandalized. This tragedy can only be stopped if heritage education is improved and communities are involved in the conservation of monuments (Mvenge, 1996). Access to cultural property by local communities is important because it helps restore damaged self-confidence, and for development projects to succeed, the communities concerned must be self-confident (Ndoro, 2001b). This can only be achieved once people reacquire a sense of ownership of their heritage and begin to be proud of their past.

In the past, cultural heritage conservation was an everyday activity for local communities. It was a holistic approach to life. This holistic approach has been splintered by the economic pressure and colonialism that separated people from their heritage, especially where this heritage was glamorous. The holistic approach needs to be reinstated (Mvenge, 1996). Now, in the face of subsistence living, local communities currently rate cultural heritage conservation very lowly on their list of priorities. Even though local community members have a great respect for these sites, they are too squeezed by economic pressure to meet immediate basic needs and often cannot redirect their attention towards preparing for a future conservation catastrophe. The history and culture of a country must be protected if local communities have to see heritage sites as a resource that will

benefit them in a practical way. This can occur through empowerment projects that focus on the people's immediate needs and rely on their energy and enthusiasm.

The democratizing forces in society have also affected heritage institutions. Once considered closed circles of authority, some of these institutions now seek to interact with their communities in more meaningful ways, to apply innovative technologies and educate heritage managers by methods that reflect the increasingly dispersed authority and power within many countries in general and Kenya in particular. It is of paramount importance to carry out a community needs-assessment before engaging it in management of the heritage as this helps to iron out possible areas of conflict. Therefore, there is need to break the 'culture of silence'; people need to gain a sense of self-confidence and know what they think is important if community involvement is to succeed (Hope and Timmel, 1984).

In Zimbabwe, through a joint venture project between local communities and the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (hereafter NMMZ), the problem of cultural heritage site conservation is beginning to be addressed. Some local communities have asked that NMMZ help them set up community empowerment schemes at local heritage sites. Others have asked to take over the management of the sites altogether. Although neither group has any experience in these fields, the combined effort has the potential of being highly successful for all interested parties.

Recent developments in museology show that there is change in cultural heritage institutions original mandate with regard to goals and policies. Cultural heritage institutions are in transition and are influenced by change in physical resources and technology as well as by cultural sensibilities and ideology (Hide, 2000). Among the changes to be contemplated is the endeavour made by the cultural heritage institutions and their supporters to expand their audience and to reach it in new ways. Heritage institutions have striven to become more democratic in their structure and more responsive at all levels to the interest of broad-based public. This practical reconstruction

entails implicit revisions of fundamental concept that, among its early familiars, required no explanation and needed no reform. In many heritage institutions in Africa today, this fundamental change is not being reflected in policies or regulations governing the institutions. This study focused on the local community participation at Gede National Monument, in vis-a-vis the new museological developments, and whether it has embraced the changing original mandate of heritage institutions.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Conflict theory was used to guide this study. The theory is based on the premise that life is a struggle and that each person, each group, and each nation thrive for what they can get. At times, this struggle may involve cooperating with others or forming alliances but, in the end, we all struggle to gain control over scarce resources (Lindsey, 1997). Parts of society are in competition with one another, ready to break into open conflict at any time. Moreover, the guiding principle of social life is disequilibria and change. Communities are disadvantaged in that they do not have state machinery to manage heritage sites. Communities compete with heritage managers for scarce resources, the revenue from tourism. In most cases, it is the heritage manager that wins at the cost of the community. These two groups are always entwined in a struggle that threatens the survival of the cultural heritage. The conflict perspective suggests that social problems are a natural and inevitable outcome of social struggle. Conservation problems, then, evolve naturally from this inherent conflict between communities and the heritage managers. As the community reacts to heritage managers, other problems evolve, e.g., vandalism, deforestation, etc.

Concessions granted by the heritage managers to communities such as limited access to national monuments is because the community fought for it. Conflict has a positive feature as it also brings people together. The conflict theory emphasizes that power, privilege, and other resources are limited and that they are distributed unequally among various groups in society. Thus, group pursues its own interest and values. Conflict in society is natural and inevitable. Equilibrium is only a temporary balance of social forces, one that is in the process of tipping out of balance. The

powerful always look for trade-offs to dispel conflict. For example, local people might be given an area to sell curios at the heritage site. Finally, change brings problems, change in the way heritage was managed traditionally and how it is being managed today from borrowed euro-centric ideas, the 'scientific' approach (Ndoro, 2001a). Marx and Engels argued that primitive societies were essentially egalitarian because there was no surplus generated, hence no private property (Lindsey, 1997). Once private property emerged, capitalistic institutions developed and power came to be consolidated in the hands of private property and, with the advent of capitalism, heritage became state property and state supremacy unquestioned. The continued productive existence of heritage institutions and their sustainability is closely related to community sustainability. In this case one part should thrive whilst the other is struggling. Decisions and actions that lead to responsible resource use will also result in communities that are more considerate of the common good, the shared goals and mutual obligations.

2.4 Hypotheses

- ❖ Professional heritage managers try to keep out the community from management of Gede heritage site because they assume locals know nothing about conservation.
- ❖ The local community insists on participating in the management of Gede heritage site because they feel they have their own knowledge of conserving the heritage.

2.5 Definition of Terms

- **Heritage Manager** is a representative controlling cultural heritage on behalf of the central government.
- **Community** is defined as a body of people sharing the same geographical boundaries.
- **Community participation and involvement** means to enhance the ability of a particular community to control heritage, or to develop collective influence over cultural heritage.
- **Conservation** is action that is taken by both museum and community to ensure the long term care of the heritage.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

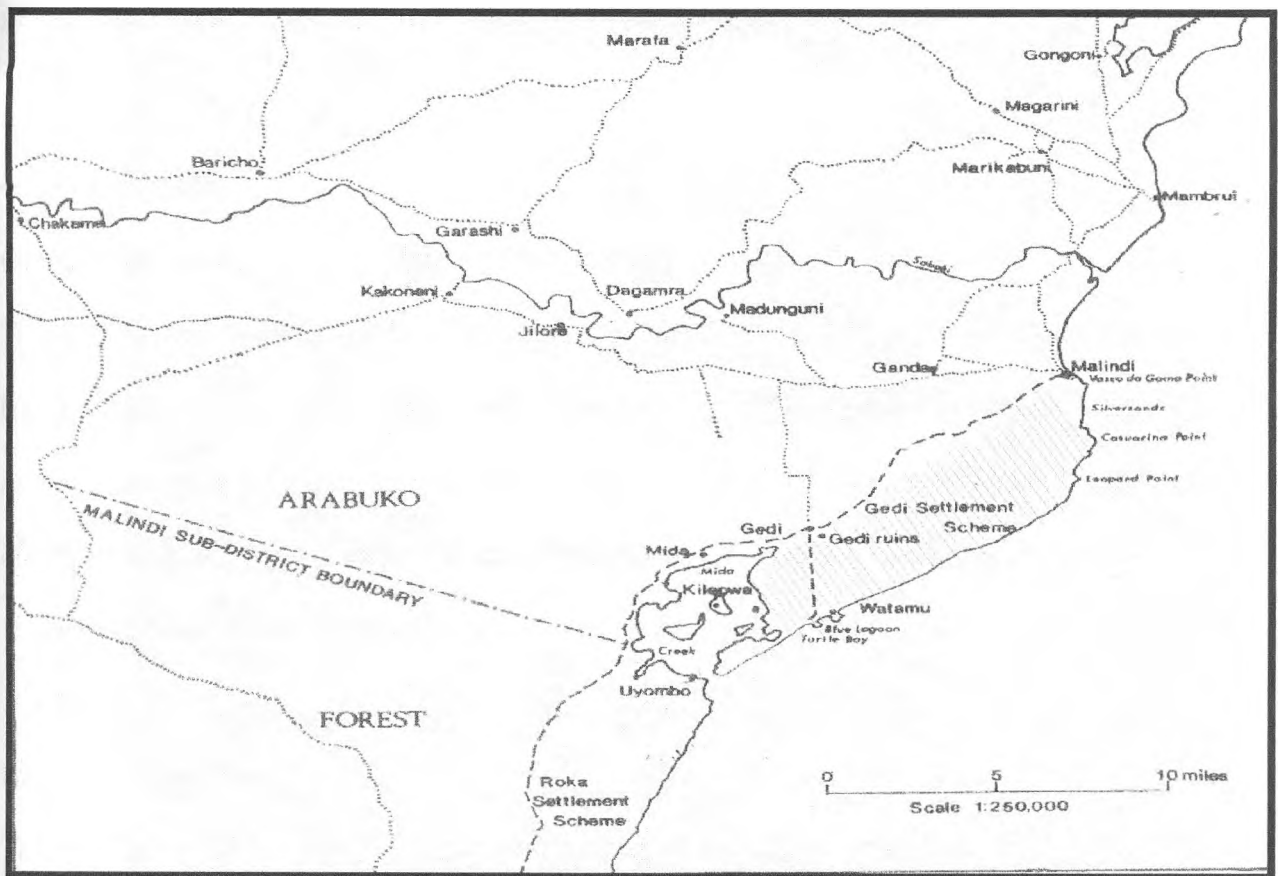
3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology used in the study. Included in this chapter are descriptions on the research site, study design, universe, sampling size and sampling procedure. The methods of data collection and analysis are also presented.

3.2 Research site

Gede lies along the coast of Kenya, 6.4 kilometres from the Indian Ocean, 10 km from the town of Malindi in Kenya and 104km from the town of Mombasa. It is comprised of town walls, mosques, houses and tombs belonging to Arab settlements that were at their peak in the 14th and 15th centuries (Map.3.1). The population of this coast town was of mixed Arab-Bantu stock with some Persian, Indian and Malayan elements (Kirkman, 1963). Gede stands on a coral spur dominating the country to the south and east, and covers an area of about 18 hectares. It was founded in the 13th century, but was largely rebuilt in the 15th century. Gede may have been an iron-working centre, as one Arab geographer spoke of iron mines in Malindi, and iron deposits have been noticed at Watamu. It is probable, from the number of 15th century potsherds found in surface levels, that Gede ceased to exist as a town early in the 16th century, but was reoccupied towards the end of the century (Kirkman, 1963). In the 17th century it was abandoned forever as a result of the southward movement of the Orma who drove the Swahili from most of their mainland settlements.

Although Gede was of no political importance, the quantity and occasional fine quality of the wares found there show that it was in regular contact, through Malindi, with the outside world and its inhabitants were relatively rich. In addition to being an archaeological site, Gede coastal forest is a



Map3.2: Malindi Region (Martin,1973)



The study area: Gede ruins and the Gede resettlement scheme.

3.3 Study design

This is qualitative analytical study that established the local community involvement in the activities carried out at Gede National Monument. The study looked at this involvement using the following variables; utilization, management interaction, contribution, participation and conflict. The research was based on the data collected by questionnaires administered to the local community surrounding Gede National Monument and Key informant interview guide was used to gain information on how Gede is managed from NMK point of view.

3.4 Population

Gede resettlement scheme population constituted the population for this research.

The study sample involved adults, like community elders and leaders, professionals like teachers both secondary and primary, and Heritage managers. In short every adult in the Gede resettlement scheme. These are people surrounding Gede National Monument at present The population consists of the Giriama, the Swahili and other ethnic groups from Kenya's upland. The Giriama and the Swahili are described in detail below.

3.4.1 The Giriama

The population of the study area was comprised of the Agiriama and the WaSwahili. The latter share the same history with the builders of the monument. Ownership of the ruins has more to do with religion than direct descendants from the original builders. Communities other than the Swahili society who have interest in the site for various reasons were included in the study population as well. The Giriama traditional history says that these originated in Shungwaya, and the Swahili also claim the same origins (Martin, 1973; Middleton, 2000). They were forced to leave the area when the Oromo moved into the Shungwaya area in the sixteenth century. The Giriama went

south along the coast and eventually settled in Rabai hills North West of Mombasa. Here they remained until about 1875 when they moved north because the land was no longer productive. By 1890 they settled around Sabaki River (Martin, 1973). The Giriama constitute ninety percent of the African population in Malindi. They reckon partilineal descent and lack centralized political organisation. Traditionally, they have been ruled by various complex forms of age-sets and generation-sets that are today of little importance (Middleton, 2000). The Giriama are mostly farmers and coconut growers.

3.4.2 The WaSwahili

The Swahili people are linguistically and ethnically related to Bantu speakers but they do differ in several important respects. They differ in dialect, cultural behaviour, religion, residences and forms of internal stratification. The Swahili settlements extend in line along the coast in most places interspaced with settlements of non-Swahili speakers, in Kenya, among others the Giriama and the Boni. Almost all their settlements are located on the sides of islets set in creeks or on the banks of creeks. A few of these settlements lie 3 kilometres from the coastline. Today the WaSwahili are neither political nor commercial leaders of coastal society, as they were in the past. Their significance essentially lies in the fact that they have for centuries defined the values of coastal society: their literate civilization and Islamic leadership have been seen as forming the epitome of social behaviour and others have emulated them as far as they have been able to do so (Middleton, 2000). The Swahili are urban people living in distinct settlements such as the stone towns. Some towns had surrounding walls, both for protection and symbolically to separate themselves from settlements belonging to the non-Swahili. Today many of these stone towns are in a ruined state. Gede, Shanga and Ungwana are some of the stone towns with unique architecture and can be traced as far back in time as the 9th and 10th centuries.

3.5 Study Sample

A maximum number of thirty people were interviewed out of the earmarked hundred, and systematic random sampling was used. Those interviewed comprised both sexes.

3.6 Sampling procedure

The procedure of purposive sampling was used and this involved verifying that the respondent met the criteria for being in the sample. Respondents were chosen on the basis of how long they had stayed in Gede resettlement scheme. Households were selected using a person with broad knowledge about the local community. The following are the pre-designed groups that were interviewed: a traditional leader, Imam, school head/teachers surrounding the monument and local government leaders.

3.7 Data collection

Data for this study were collected using a questionnaire, key informant interviews and direct observation.

3.7.1 Questionnaire

Structured interview was used as a data gathering technique. A questionnaire with both open-ended and closed questions was designed for this purpose (Appendix 1). The questionnaire was used to get information on how the local community is involved in conservation management at Gede National Monument. Thus, the questionnaire was specifically designed for the local community. The type of information collected by the questionnaire was on the local community use, interact, get involved in and contribute to management, and whether they have any conflicts with NMK over Gede National Monument.

3.7.2 Key Informant interviews

Apart from the structured interviews, two key informants were interviewed. The two informants have worked for NMK for more than 15 years and were able to provide information on NMK policies over the years and how the legal framework works. The purpose of the meetings was to probe the ideas of the interviewees about NMK perspective in managing Gede Monument. A key informant guide (Appendix 2) was our instrument of data collection here.

3.7.3 Secondary sources

Secondary sources in the form of theses, books, journals and other publications were also used to gather information on the research topic.

3.8 Data analysis

Since most of the collected data was qualitative in nature, qualitative data analysis methods were used in its analysis. First, the data was assigned numerical values, which were then manipulated to help achieve greater insights into the meaning of the data and help examine the hypotheses. These methods were used to try and gain understanding of a situation, experience or process. This was made possible by learning from detailed accounts that people gave in their own words, or what was discovered in documents. In this setting, emphasis was on complete understanding of the cognitive process over time, and swift discovery and illustration, for example, themes coming up in different focus groups.

3.9 Problems Encountered

Limited financial resources allocated by the sponsors were not enough to carry out as many field trips as possible to obtain maximum data. To solve this problem only local community interviews were carried out in the field and key informants interviews were held at Old Law Court Building in Mombasa. Language limitations affected me very much in data collection as I noted in the field that some of the answers to the questions, when translated were not the ones I was expecting. I spend much of the time trying to let the translator and the interviewee understand the language as I

changed the translators twice. I then finally hired a university graduate to help in translating and this person was not an interested party as the first translators were from the museum.

3.10 Ethical issues

During this research participation was voluntary and people were told that they could refuse to divulge certain information about themselves. Participants were also given the right to refuse to take part in the study. People were assured of their right to privacy and consent from adults was sought. Respondents were assured that the information given would be treated with confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Community and Museums

4.1 NMK Perspective

NMK is of the opinion that the local community has a feeling that Gede National Monument is a tourist destination. They do not, therefore, see why they should be involved in activities called for at the monument. It was also asserted that NMK has tried to sensitise the community about the benefit of getting involved but there seems to be a lot of resistance. Various activities have been arranged in the past but very few or none of the locals attended. According to the key informant, the local community fears to comment in public about museum activities. To quote him, 'it is better to deal with children than laymen'. Layman here refers to villagers and most probably those who are not educated. This is the main reason why he thinks the community distances itself from museum activities.

Some adults have been participating in various museum activities but it is nothing to write home about. For example, on the official opening of the new site museum in 2000, local traditional dancers were invited to entertain invited guests and the public that thronged the event. The dancers accepted the offer because of the money that they were promised. In 1985 the Curator in charge of Gede National monument invited two local elders to identify tree and shrub species, which do have medicinal qualities and the ailments they treat. Having completed the project the local community was invited to use the trees and shrubs for free but the response was negative. On the International Museum Day, celebrated 18 May of each year, entrance is free but still adults in particular do not attend.

A good number of people do come to use the Mosque for spiritual or religious nourishment. In the Mosque there is a small bowl containing charcoal and incense and it is this bowl that visitors of any religion light to get cleaned. However, it is worth noting that these visitors are not from the local

community. There are areas of conflict between the museum and the community. This happens when the community cuts down trees for building purposes. The community targets Gede because it is the only area around it with a virgin forest. Quite often, the offenders are taken to police where they are fined. The NMK legislation, according to the curator, is a very good piece of legislation, although certain sections must be changed to deter would-be offenders. These are sections that deal with fines, which he feels they too low.

Gede National Monument involves indigenous knowledge in the conservation programmes undertaken on the site. NMK trains stone masons and artisans at the Swahili Cultural Centre in Mombasa. Some of the trained people are used to restore collapsed walls and roofs at Gede monument. However, trained personnel do not come from the Gede community.

According to another informant, for the Gede community to participate in its activities, NMK must employ qualified people to run the National Monument. The community at Gede has been marginalized for so long that they do not feel as being part of the museum. Stakeholders must come up with activities that can be appreciated by the community. The general feeling among the community is that they feel left out of most of the activities done at the museum. One of the issues raised was that employment of seasonal labour is not properly done and access to firewood is limited to those who are friendly to the museum management. The community is of the opinion that income that the monument generates from visitors should find its way into improving local livelihoods. The local community is not aware that it is part of the stakeholders at Gede National Monument. Lack of awareness programmes from the museum is to blame for this ignorance within the community. The monument has been functioning for many years without an education officer and currently Gede has a relatively new education officer, who is a trained teacher by profession, but who does not have any museum or community based training.

Another reason attributed to non-community participation is the community attitude that since in the past the site was a preserve of a few scientists and tourists, this situation still obtains. The spiritual value ascribed to the site by the community has since disappeared after the site was taken over by NMK. The same situation occurred at Jumba La Mtwana, an ancient Swahili city in Mtwapa, near Mombasa. Spiritual leaders simply stopped their activities after NMK took over the site.

The second key informant identified the following as being the key stakeholders at Gede National Monument: NMK, tourists, tour operators, schools, spiritual leaders and the local populace. The informant suggested that the key issue that must preoccupy the stakeholders is the implementation of the management plan for the site. The management plan has been prepared and NMK is sourcing funds so that it can be implemented smoothly. A number of issues have been raised in the plan, including marketing of the site, networking with key tour operators in the province, lack of publicity materials and community participation. One of the issues captured in the management plan is that of the management system at the National Monument. Currently, Gede Museum and Kipepeo Butterfly Project have individual management structures, yet they are in one place and both are under NMK. We observed that the local community is much more involved with the Kipepeo project than with Gede National Monument. All the informants informed me that there is no group that claims ownership of the ruins.

Despite information based on the key informants and interviewees showing that some sections of the Gede National Monument are used for spiritual purposes (Fig.4.1), no individual person interviewed claimed to use the site for such purposes. The category ‘others’ includes people who benefit indirectly from tourism and those who fetch firewood and building poles.

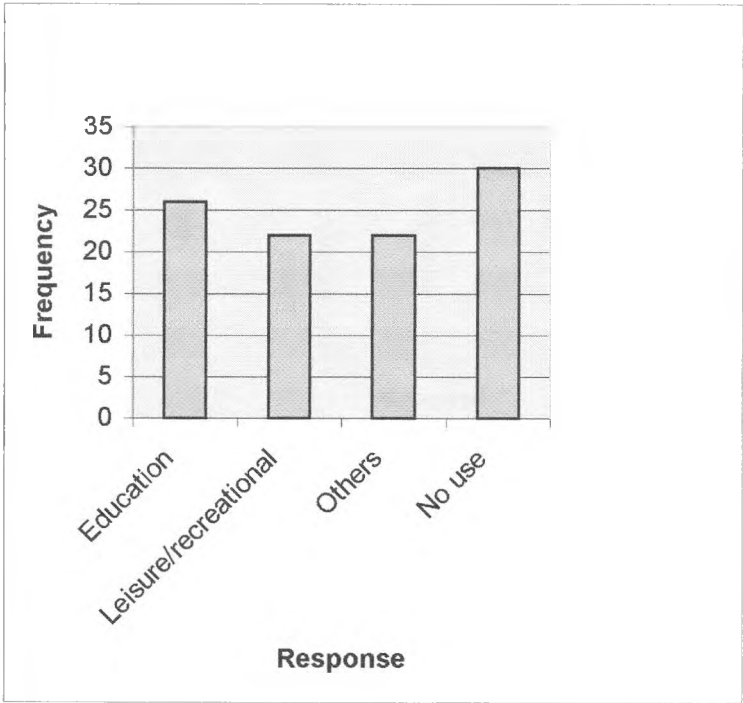


Fig 4.1: People's use Gede National Monument.

Those who did not give their response were indifferent as to who should manage Gede monument. Apart from NMK and LC other suggested institutions to run the monument are local municipal authority and the private sector (Fig.4.2).

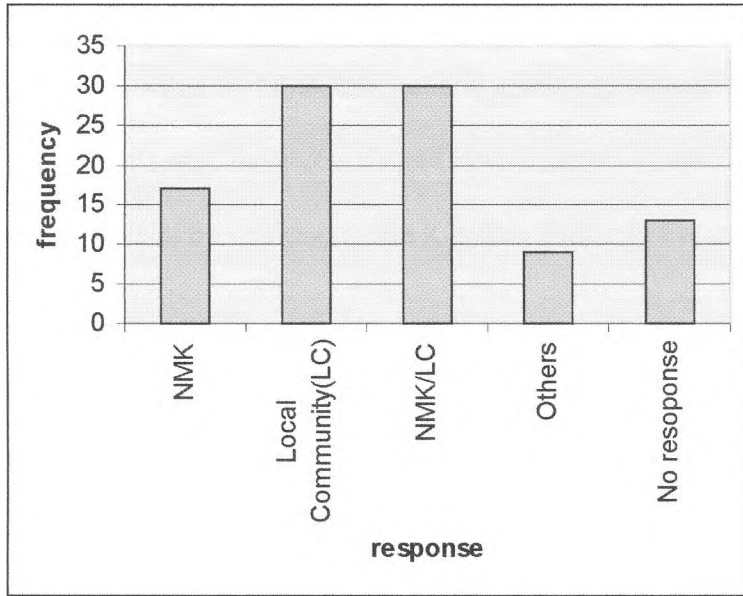


Fig 4.2: Responses on who should be responsible for the management of Gede.

Those who responded positively said that they work at Kipepeo Butterfly project just on the borders of Gede Monument so they are always in touch with the Gede management. Another one said he got in touch with Gede management when he was looking for employment for his son (Fig.4.3).

The Kipepeo project is going to be discussed in a separate paragraph.

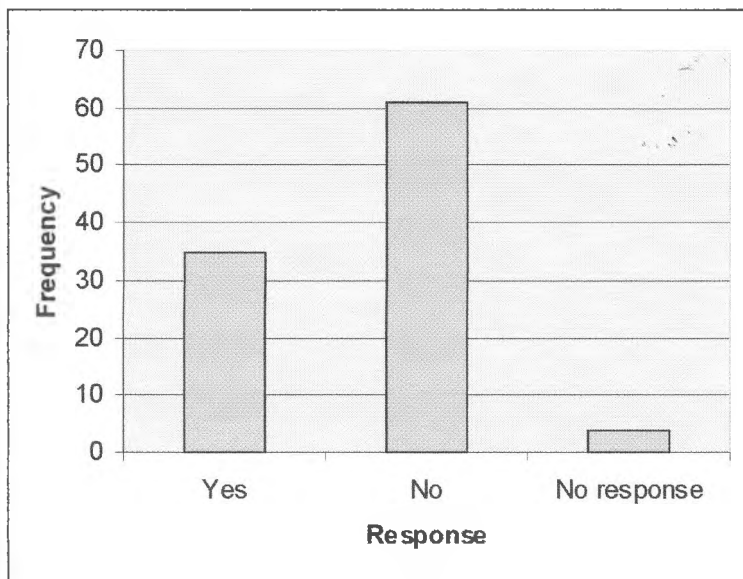


Fig 4.3: Interaction between Heritage Mangers and local community.

The seventy-four percent respondents said they have never contributed to the management or any activity at the monument due to various reasons, ranging from ignorance on the part of respondents, not being invited by NMK and general animosity between the locals and NMK (Fig.4.4).

Respondents who have contributed have done so by taking visitors to the monument, spreading awareness and by working in the Kipepeo Butterfly Project.

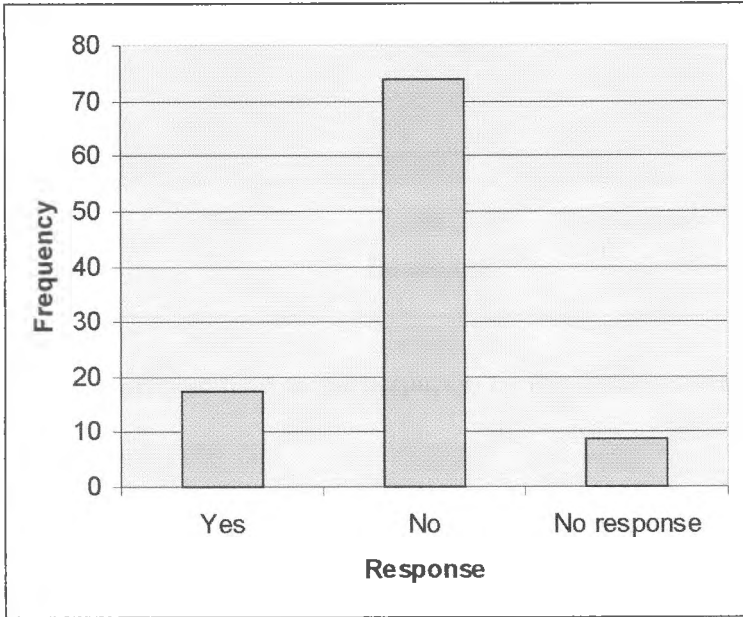


Fig. 4.4: Contribution by locals to management of Gede Monument.

Some said they participate by making awareness and one said that he had participated in conservation activity at Kisumu Museum (Fig.4.5)

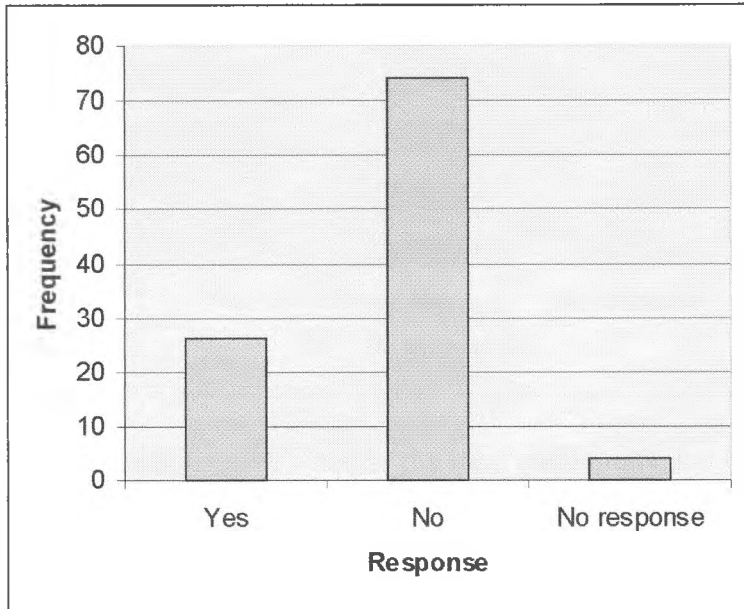


Fig. 4.5: Involvement or participation by the local community in conservation activities at Gede Monument.

Here are some of the conflicts outlined by those who responded positively: Gede forest harbours monkeys that destroy crops; some wish to cut good poles which are found in Gede forest but fear being apprehended by Gede museum staff, the monument receives a lot of tourists but the community is still languishing in poverty; and, finally, revenue received from tourism must be remitted to the community (Fig.4.6).

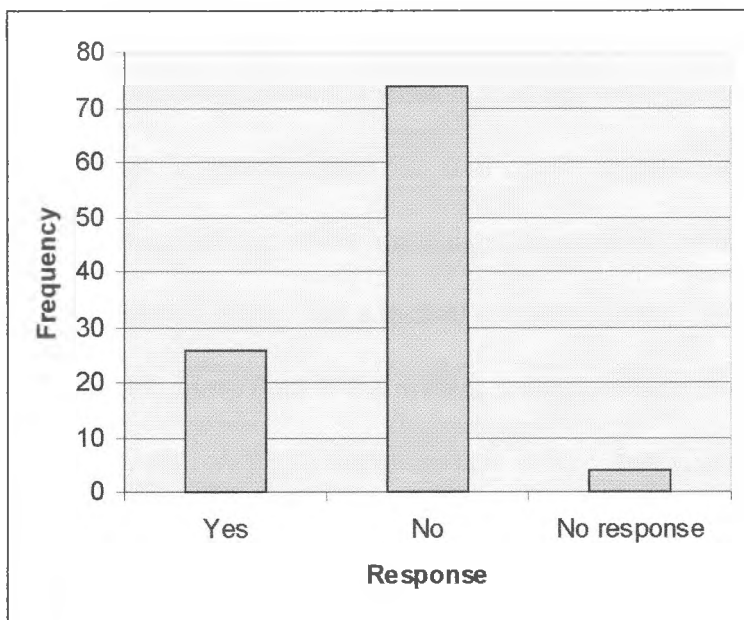


Fig 4.6: Responses on whether the local community and Gede Museum have any conflicts over the National Monument.

4.2 Community Concerns

The following are some of the variables used to interview local community members in the study area: their utilization of the monument, management issues, conservation, values of the site, interaction and general concerns of the community. Three quarters of the respondents were of the opinion that Gede National Monument must be used primarily as a source of economic elevation for the local community. Five percent of young adults was advocating for direct employment at the museum. Some stated that they are qualified enough to get professional jobs while others wanted to be employed as seasonal labourers. They claimed that most of the employees of NMK at Gede are foreigners from other provinces. Some adults would be content if their children were employed full-time.

There is a group of people that benefits indirectly and this group is advocating for projects that will provide income to locals. These projects could be, they say, in the form of activities such as the sell of curios and traditional dancing. There is a traditional dance troupe that is already operational.

This group used to be housed within the Gede National Monument site boundaries, but at present it

is outside the site and is operating independently of the museum. The dancing group is appealing to Gede museum to market it since it does not have the financial or human resource capacity to do that by itself. More often than not, tour operators who visit Gede ruins market the traditional group, but since these are not under any obligation most of the times they are forgotten, they claim. Curio vendors feel that if they had a mutual cooperation with NMK through Gede museum, both parties would benefit more than in the present scenario where they are outside the monument. They said that usually visitors go to the monument before they visit the curio stalls, by which time they might be tired or in a rush. More often than not, therefore, the visitors leave without visiting the stalls. The vendors feel if they were accommodated inside the monument, this would enable the visitors to access them more easily.

Some locals are presently utilizing Gede National Monument in a number of ways. These include educational, for leisure, honey, firewood, water, and tourism spin-off effects (fig. 4.1). Those who benefit or use Gede as an educational tool are primary and secondary schools surrounding the museum. As a monument, a lot can be learnt from its history. Schools borrow teaching aids and the library is open to the locals. Schoolteachers interviewed highlighted the need for the museum to have relevant books or literature. Gede Museum has a policy that allows locals to fetch water and to collect dead wood for use as firewood. Most locals interviewed acknowledged this policy but complained that in principle the policy is there but in practice there is a lot of discrimination. The claim is that a certain section of the community is favoured. Some respondents said that they benefited from Gede indirectly from the tourism spin-off-effects. Vendors of various wares, groceries and service stations, all benefit because of Gede National Monument.

People interviewed want the area to be managed by NMK, but with the participation of the local community (fig.4.2). Only three people had a different opinion on the issue of who is supposed to run the monument. These people want Gede to be managed by the local council, private sector and the other suggested traditional custodians. Those who wanted NMK stated that the institution also

has the capacity to pay salaries and has the technical expertise in the field of conservation.

Community participation would help in contributing indigenous knowledge systems. Part of the income received from visitors should be remitted into community developmental projects. Gede Museum does not in any remarkable way involve the local community in its conservation activities and the locals do not in any way contribute to the management of the cultural property.

4.3 Kipepeo Butterfly Project

The Kipepeo Project is a butterfly farm within the grounds of Gede ruins, set up in 1993 to give farmers around the Arabuko-Sokote Forest a small legitimate income from the forest. This was to compensate them for the damage to their crops caused by elephants and baboons (Map 3.2).

Butterfly pupae are reared by local farmers living next to the forest, and are sold through the project to live exhibits all over the world. By linking income generation with the forest, it is hoped to gain support of the local community for forest conservation. Whether this project is a success or not and to whom it is a success is a subject beyond this study. There is a community-based project managed for the local community by NMMK. This project is within Gede monument yet for many years Gede has not come up with sustainable community programme or projects. Kipepeo project is not integrated into the Gede Management System.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

The independent state of Kenya and other states in Africa have continued with the traditional image of the museum. Thus, far from overcoming the shortfalls of the old institutions, these states have been chiefly concerned with making the museum a prop of their national image. The consequence of this attitude is that spectacular museums have been built with big ambitions in mind, such as the Gede Museum conference space. Most provisions for proper functioning of these spectacular museums are usually neglected and in many cases the projects become white elephants. The museum architecture is Swahili inspired in the middle of a Giriama settlement. The intended target here is the foreign tourist market rather than local community. Passive factors such as architecture have an influence in the way people behave towards certain institutions, and museums are no exception. A final pitfall is the lack of flexibility in the way Gede Museum is run; it is integrated into a paralyzing administrative structure. This scenario is also prevalent in other African countries, for example, in Ivory Coast, museums are traditionally marked by lack of integration into the community where they are situated and inflexibility in the way they are run (Koffi, 1995).

Rigid legal frameworks are the cause of rigid administrative structures in many museums in Africa. Heritage managers must be flexible and take note of the past colonial injustices done to societies and their cultural heritage. When monuments were gazzetted some communities were displaced and relocated elsewhere. In this regard, museums have a moral obligation to pay back to the local communities what they have been denied in terms of economic and religious benefit.

The community around Gede is very much interested in getting involved in the museum's activities. The museum has also tried to include the community in a couple of ill-fated projects but this has been met with a lot of resistance. For example, in 2002 two stakeholders' meetings held at

Gede museum where not attended by the local community despite being invited many times (Jimbi Katana, pers. comm.). The question to be asked is why it is that locals do not turn up or are not interested in participating in museum activities.

The reason, as I noted during the research, is that Gede Museum staff still have an 'elitist' approach to the management of the cultural property. This is supported by the fact that sixty percent of those people interviewed have never interacted with Gede Museum workers. Gede Museum workers view Gede National Monument as NMK property, which is aimed at restricting the locals in their access to it as much as possible. As one of the managers put it, “ I prefer to work with children than adults”. Instead of finding out why adults are not interested in the affairs of the monument, working with children only exacerbates the strained relationship. In any case, these children belong to the same community as the adults. Gede museum relies too much on the NMK Act, which alienates local communities from the affairs of heritage property. The heritage property is seen as belonging the government, which is a colonial legacy. Inclusion of community involvement in legislation or policies would go a long way in reflecting the changing museum mandate and this change should have an impact on Heritage Managers.

For community involvement to succeed, cultural heritage institutions need appropriate administrative structures. Appropriate forms of administrative framework need to be carefully evaluated at the national level in the process of research towards new legislation. What is best suited to Kenya should be provided for in the legislation, given that, by and large, maximum flexibility is advantageous to the functioning of the heritage institutions. New or revised legislation should provide for the rights of local communities and individuals to derive social and economic benefits from heritage development through cultural tourism and incentives. The legislation should provide for the creation of structures representative of affected sectors within government and the civil society, including community institutions, in policy, administrative, and advisory positions. These structures should ensure effective communication, cooperation and partnership. Legislation

should, therefore, provide, where possible, mechanisms for conflict resolution through appeals processes and mediation.

Museums are slowly changing to meet the needs of their communities, and along with this change go a shift in the skills used and roles played by museum education staff. As museums become more consumer-oriented, collecting, displaying and education policies must evolve to meet new challenges (Dodd, 1994). The process of involving the community requires many skills different from those used traditionally in formal education. Such skills have more to do about negotiating, networking and confidence building. To meet these needs, Gede Museum needs staff with different skills and knowledge, and experience in working with community groups.

At one end of the scale, and still widespread, are community museum projects that are planned and implemented by museum managers, in which “involvement” refers to the community merely providing labour for the projects. At the other end, and still not as common as they should be, are projects in which the planning, implementation, management and distribution of benefits are decided by the community, in a facilitating policy environment (where museum policy supports and encourages participating development) and with the support of museum technical personnel and field staff. Currently, most projects and programmes fall in between and involve some degree of joint participation by museums and the community (Warner, 1995). In the few projects that some individuals in the community have been involved in, such as the identification of medicinal plants, most locals view these projects as targeting certain individuals. Even the community does not know of such a project. In such a case the community views such individuals and the museum with suspicion. Gede museum must try to be as transparent as possible to reduce the level of mistrust. Many locals indicated that they have never been involved in any conservation activity at Gede because either it is assumed that they know nothing or because Gede has enough manpower to handle its conservation demands. So, it is not surprising that the seventy-three percent of the people

interviewed said that they have never participated or contributed to the management of Gede National Monument.

The management at Gede pointed out that sometimes they do have conflicts with locals over the use of some natural resources found within the boundaries of the monument. Locals mainly offend the Museum by cutting down trees for firewood, some of which are endangered. The museum reacts by apprehending the culprits and handing them over to the police where they usually pay fines. This does not only worsen the conflict, but strengthens the community's conviction that Gede belongs to the government. Most of the people interviewed (see fig.4.6) pointed out that they do not have any conflict with NMK regarding Gede National Monument. Many people think of conflict in terms of confrontation or aggression but at Gede there is what I would like to term latent conflict. Between the museum and the local community, there is still a wary divide and developments must progress to a point where mutual and cordial relations would prevail.

Sensitivity to the needs of the community groups and quick sure judgment on what will be most helpful at any particular moment, can only be developed through constant practice, complete openness to feedback from the community participants, and critical reflection and analysis (Hope and Timmel, 1984). Unfortunately, for the Gede community all this is not forthcoming from NMK.

The research showed that there are various groups within the community that insist on participating in Museum activities at Gede. These groups include traditional dancers, curio sellers and the unemployed. These differ in what they want and their interests. Some people expressed their desire to be involved in any project at the monument, but at the time of the study there was none. To satisfy these demands Gede Museum would need to carry out research to identify community needs around the museum. The museum should identify which groups already participate and which ones do not and find out reasons for either scenario. Although studies show that carrying out research does not eliminate the problem of certain groups or people who speak for others, to solve this

problem Gede Museum needs to include different groups or individuals who are currently who hold different views.

5.2 Conclusion

It has been noted that due to historical reasons, although some institutions are changing, Gede Museum is still very far from involving the local community in its activities. The museum is not blending with change though some museums in Kenya have already community-based projects in conservation of the heritage. One such museum is Thimlich Ohinga. The local community is involved at almost every level of management and is continuously updated on any new developments on the site. In some instances local communities have been proved to insist on participating in the activities and management of museum programmes because they feel that they have their own knowledge of conserving the heritage. However, in the case of Gede, the local community has been totally shut out. Be that as it may, communities are not always correct, but so are museums. A degree of mistrust, therefore, will always be there between the community and the museum. As cultural institutions museums are, therefore, are supposed to be a reflection of their communities in all aspects of life.

5.3 Recommendations

- ❑ Efforts should be made to revive community-based systems of conservation to ensure that communities are effective partners in conservation.
- ❑ Community abilities to protect sites need to be strengthened through provisions of tools and other materials that assist in management.
- ❑ Gede Museum must have a community outreach officer trained in community relations and education.
- ❑ Members of the community should be involved at all stages right from the time of project design through evaluation.

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Appendix 1: Structured Questionnaire

INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

Programme: Graduate Diploma in Management of Heritage And museum Collections

This questionnaire is going to help the researcher to understand the nature of community involvement in management of cultural heritage in Malindi with specific attention to Gede national monument.

Background information

1 a) What is your name? _____ Date of interview _____

b) Please tick your age group (20-30) _____ (30-40) _____ 40 upwards _____

c) What is your gender? Male _____ Female _____

d) Ethnic group _____

e) Level of education attained: primary _____ secondary _____ university _____ other _____

f) Occupation: non-farming activity _____ fishing _____ handicrafts _____ farmer _____ shopkeeper _____
business person _____

2) How did you come to be in Gede area and how long have you been here?

3) What do you know about Gede National Monument and what values do you attach to it?

4) What traditional activities were performed in this area in the past and have there been any changes in these activities? if so, why?

5) For what do you utilize Gede national monument? Please tick the appropriate box

educational

spiritual/ religious

economic

recreational

others

6) How do you want the area to be managed? By:

National Museums of Kenya

Local community

Local community and National museum

Other

7) In what ways do you benefit from the Gede ruins and the area surrounding it?

8) Did you learn about cultural heritage in your school?

Yes ___ No ___

9) Do you have any interaction with heritage managers at Gede?

Yes ___ No ___

10) Do you contribute to the management of Gede cultural area? If so, how? If not why?

Yes ___ No ___

11) What concerns you most about the current management of Gede National monument?

12) Have you ever been involved/ participated in conservation activities by the National Museums of Kenya?

Yes ___ No ___

13) Do you have any conflict with the National Museums of Kenya over Gede?

Yes ___ No ___

Thank you for your cooperation and the information you have supplied will be kept very confidential. For any enquiries contact:

Henry Chiwaura

PMDA

PO Box 90010

Mombasa

Appendix 2 Key Informant Guide

1. How do you explain the relationship/ interaction between Gede Museum and the local community?
2. What issues do you think stakeholders should address in order to manage Gede National Monument best?
3. Do you involve the local community in the management of Gede National Museum?
4. What do you think have been your strengths or weaknesses in implementing the NMK Act?
5. What is the current management structure at Gede Museum?
6. Are there any groups that claim ownership of the ruins?

