



## Tana River Life Foundation

Tana River Life Foundation (TRLF) is a charitable organization based in Idsowe Village in the Tana Delta in Kenya. It was founded as a private trust in 2005 by Gabriel Teo Kian Chong, a Malaysian citizen resident in Kenya. TRLF was registered as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with the Kenya NGOs Coordination Board in 2007 (Reg. OP258/051/2007/0440/4836 & VAT Pin No.P051200475T).

In recognition of its contributions to society as an Institute of Public Benefit, TRLF was awarded income tax exempt status by the Kenya Revenue Authority for a 5 year period from 24th April 2013 to 24th April 2018.

## Organization's Mission & Vision

Tana River Life Foundation's mission is to assist individuals and thereby entire rural communities, especially the marginalized and economically disadvantaged, become self-reliant in dignity.

Tana River Life Foundation's vision is to build a more just and honest society, leading to more complete humanity for all.

Through education support schemes, sustainable agricultural projects, community-based entrepreneurship schemes, and youth integral formation programmes, TRLF seeks to nurture the inherent talents and potentials of people such that they have the freedom and ability to build lives of dignity for themselves, their dependents, and their larger communities.

By connecting people from economically developed and developing societies, TRLF also seeks to give more meaning and depth to each life that it encounters.



**S** urmont  
**E** ducate  
**E** mpower  
**D** ignify



# ***SOLAR LANTERNS FOR TANA STUDENTS***

## *a) Project Description*

Solar Lanterns for Tana Students that will provide primary school students preparing for their final examination with better facilities to study. The main beneficiaries are upper primary school students in Class 7 and 8, aged between 12 to 15 years.

The project will be implemented in interior locations and villages, thereby levelling the playing field for the most disadvantaged members of the Tana Delta. It emphasizes grassroots community participation and shared responsibilities in enhancing early education and development of public schools and facilities.

The Tana Delta is one of the least developed areas of Kenya, with a multi ethnic, multi religious local population. It is also a RAMSAR site and is home to one of the most diverse ecosystems in the East African coast. In 2012/2013, ethnic violence ravaged the Tana Delta, displacing many of the local population, especially those from the most interior locations, with loss of homes, properties and livelihoods for many.

TRLF identified the project through its grassroots partnership with entire local communities in Tana Delta since 2007. Since the outbreak of communal violence in 2012, TRLF staff and volunteers have regularly visited all the remote villages most affected by the violence to understand the root causes. A long term plan to mitigate and end the violence was put in place. It was conceptualized through a series of visits and meetings with the communities. Education is a key component of the plan.

Educational facilities supported by TRLF are open to all ethnic groups. They are designed as oases where children from different ethnic groups learn to tolerate, accept and finally celebrate their differences. Equipping schools with facilities and equipment which benefits different communities is the first step of encouraging people to live together peacefully.

A total of six (6) public primary schools from these four locations have been selected to benefit from this project.

|            |                                 |   |                       |
|------------|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| These are: | (a) Kilelengwani Primary School | - | Kilelengwani Location |
|            | (b) Kau Primary School          | - | Kilelengwani Location |
|            | (c) Riketa Primary School       | - | Kilelengwani Location |
|            | (d) Assa Primary School         | - | Assa Location         |
|            | (e) Ozi Primary School          | - | Ozi Location          |
|            | (f) Kitere Primary School       | - | Ndera Location        |



Funds will be distributed to the following activities.

| No | Description   | Purpose   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | Solar facilities (solar kits with lights, panels and batteries to provide lighting to the classrooms) | To enable students to study at night – many homes lack electricity and students are hence unable to complete their homework at home once night falls. The generator will provide electricity for lighting classrooms at night so that students can complete their homework in school and return home after. |
| 2  | Street Light Solar Panels   | To enable the surrounding of the school compound to have better lighting system that enhances security during days that there isn't moonlight.  |

*b) Project Financials*

1 USD = 100 Kenyan Shillings

Total No. of Schools = 6

Total No. of Bright Box Solar Lanterns = 12 (2 per School)

Total No. Of Solar Street Lights = 12 (2 per School)

| Description                     | Cost (Kenyan Shillings) | Cost (USD) | Total Cost (USD) |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------------|
| <b>Brightbox Solar Lanterns</b> | 10,000/pc               | 100        | 1,200            |
| <b>Solar Street Light</b>       | 87,300/pc               | 873        | 10,476           |
| <b>Monitoring Charges</b>       | 50,000                  | 500        | 500              |
| <b>Total</b>                    |                         |            | <b>12,876</b>    |
|                                 |                         |            |                  |

*c) Potential Long Term Impact*

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Better education attainment will help improve the livelihood of the communities, resulting in better overall health and well-being. This should reduce inter-tribal warfare as education helps communities understand the dangers of inter community violence, and the benefits of living peacefully with other tribes. Youths will be productively engaged and help communities break out of the poverty cycle they have been trapped in for generations.



# ONGOING PROJECTS RUN BY TANA RIVER LIFE FOUNDATION

## ***1. Education Support Scheme***

### **a) Project Description**

This scheme is aimed at providing greater access to affordable quality education to rural communities in Tana River, Kilifi and Lamu Counties, with a special emphasis on Tana Delta Sub-County. Interventions target two broad areas, i.e. (a) equipping students with the necessary tools and support needed to succeed in their education, and (b) improving the learning environment.

The first intervention instills self-reliance in youths by enabling them to attain professional qualifications and technical skills. Support is rendered at primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary levels, helping youths in various aspects of their education. Support schemes exist in the following areas – school fees bursaries, hygiene, provision of study aids at subsidized prices, remedial tuition and overseas scholarships.

The cost of education is high in Kenya, especially on a Purchasing Power Parity basis. Public schools charge between USD200 per year for day schools to USD450 per year for boarding schools. For most rural families, it is a daunting economic challenge to get a child through the 4 years of secondary education. In the Tana Delta, 70% of the population survives on subsistence farming or herding livestock that they do not own. The challenge increases when more than one child in the family is of secondary school age at the same time. When parents are unable to raise enough funds to pay school fees in full, students are forced to drop out of school mid-way or at best attend school intermittently until they sit for their final school leaving examination. In most cases, where a choice has to be made, daughters have to leave school.

TRLF runs a bursary program which assists over 500 students annually. The bursaries cover up to 80% of annual school fees to enable young people to complete their education. The level of financial support is determined by the students' academic performance.

For 2014, this programme has been revamped with the intention of making it more effective. TRLF will offer two kinds of assistance, namely:

- a) Scholarships - which will be awarded through the seven public secondary schools to students who demonstrate academic progress, good discipline, self-motivation and respect for other tribes
- b) Bursaries - which will be distributed across ***all*** the locations in Tana Delta targeting the most needy 5 to 10 students from each sub-location.





All study aids, i.e. sanitary napkins, scientific calculators, dictionaries, mathematical sets, clipboards, etc. are currently distributed at a subsidy through the schools and at TRLF bursary meetings. This program facilitates learning, and is effective in boosting the educational attainment of the girls, as well as the learning of Mathematics and Sciences for all rural students.

In addition to assisting the student, TRLF develops the learning environment, through the building school infrastructure and provision of furniture and equipment to primary and secondary schools across the Tana Delta.



*TRLF youths distributing sanitary pads at subsidized prices*

The state of public secondary education in Tana Delta ten years ago was characterized by inadequate and poorly maintained school facilities, teachers who lacked commitment and professionalism, and poor appreciation by the local community on the importance of education. Teaching quality then was extremely poor, alcoholism amongst teachers was rife, chronic absenteeism the norm, and syllabuses were never covered before the national examinations. In addition, teaching staff were mainly from the local communities, making it difficult for head-teachers to make independent decisions due to communal ties.

TRLF started developing Garsen High School (GHS) since its inception in 2004 with the aim of providing a viable alternative to boarding schools which were the norm in public secondary education in Tana Delta. GHS has grown steadily and is now the biggest public secondary school in Tana Delta with an enrolment of over 600 students (compared to an average of 150 to 200 each in the other six public secondary schools). Students are from all ethnic tribes within Tana Delta as well as from the neighboring Kilifi County.

Besides having the best facilities in the County (a library, bakery and two science laboratories), it is now staffed by over 20 teachers holding bachelor degrees from all over Kenya. This exposure has helped GHS students expand their outlook in life, especially towards education and the opportunities it offers.

Within the Tana Delta GHS charges the lowest annual fees of USD120 (which includes breakfast and lunch on school days), while providing a better quality of education. It emerged as the top school in Tana Delta in the national examinations of 2012.

In addition, TRLF continually seeks to improve the quality of education by sponsoring teachers to attend specialized academic training. This scheme attracts, motivates and retains highly qualified teachers who come from outside the Tana Delta. Part of the grants are also allocated to the purchase of reference materials and teaching aids for core subjects, such as English, Science and Mathematics, as well as for educational field trips for students.

Since 2012, TRLF has also started improving basic education at nursery and primary school levels. The approach will be similar to the one that was successfully implemented at secondary school level ten years ago at GHS. A viable alternative to the tradition nursery and primary schools currently available in the Delta will be developed, and then used as a model to improve the quality of education in all other pubic primary schools in the area.

In line with this, TRLF started a pre-school in 2012. There were a total of 58 children enrolled in three classes (nursery and 2 kindergarten levels) in 2013. This number is expected to increase by 25% annually for the next 5 years, reaching an eventual student population of 180. The school is being registered as the Delta Mustard Seed Academy. The County Education Board approved our application for registration on



27th Nov 2013, and has forwarded the same to the Ministry of Education for confirmation. We expect full registration by January 2014.

b) Beneficiaries

Youths from the Tana River, Lamu and Kilifi Counties, with a greater emphasis on Tana Delta sub-county.

c) Impact and results to date

This education scheme has benefitted entire rural communities immensely. Besides the over 500 students at different levels who benefit directly annually, there has also been an indirect benefit for their entire communities in Tana Delta as explained in the preceding section entitled "Abstract".

Tana River County produces the lowest number of university graduates nationally. The TRLF intervention over the years have enabled six students from Tana River District to pursue undergraduate studies at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) in Malaysia on full tuition scholarships awarded by the governing body of UTAR. Another four students have been awarded the same scholarship for the 2014 and 2015 academic years. During semester breaks in Malaysia, these students meet with donors of the foundation in Malaysia and Singapore. This interaction helps them to better appreciate their great responsibilities towards their communities in the future.

GHS has always been and will remain a multi-ethnic and multi-faith school. Diverse communities of different tribes and faiths teach and learn together at GHS, learning to co-exist in peace. At the height of the clashes in 2012, when all other schools were closed out of fear of being attacked, GHS was able to continue operating without any disruptions. Parents transferred students from the other schools to GHS which became a safe haven. The entire student population of Buyani Secondary School (which was vandalized during the clashes) was hosted by GHS from September 2012 to July 2013.

The development of GHS as alternative model provided the necessary platform to improve the quality of education and level of professionalism in ALL the other seven public schools in Tana Delta. In 2013, TRLF held a joint meeting with the head-teachers of all seven secondary school to start joint efforts in improving service delivery in all public secondary schools from 2014 onwards. These include sponsorship of a pool of teachers from across the schools to attend training in examination techniques, a pilot mobile library project starting with two schools, and assistance with more school furniture for all schools at a subsidized rate instead of outright donations as previously practiced.

The level of competition and pride to excel is now evident amongst head teachers and staff members in secondary schools compared to the past. We hope to be even more effective as we improve the quality of education from nursery level.

## 2. Sustainable Agriculture Project

a) Project Description

Besides education, TRLF has actively promoted sustainable agriculture projects within the local community. This enables the rural subsistence farmers to improve the quality of nutrition of their families as well as earn a living from the land. Sustainable agriculture promotes methods that do not destroy the environment. As a result, the rural family will not pollute the river nor contaminate the land, ensuring that precious resources are available for generations to come.



*Planting new banana crops post the floods in October 2013*



Improved food security and alleviation of poverty for the current and future generations are ensured. By alleviating hunger and malnutrition, the project improves the learning capacity of students, raising educational attainment.

As TRLF did not own the land on which the first sustainable agriculture project was carried out, it was not feasible to put in place permanent infrastructure, e.g. secure fencing, water infrastructure and a permanent store and farmhouse. As a result, most projects suffered the consequences of drought and destruction by wildlife and theft, and incurred high costs, e.g. fuel cost for irrigation.



*Sustainable agriculture training for Dziavye women*

In 2009, TRLF purchased a 10 acre plot of farm land situated along the River Tana, and an additional 5 acres was added in 2012. With that TRLF has established a model farm which is being developed into a centre for the learning and teaching of sustainable agriculture to benefit a wider cross section of the rural communities living in and around the Tana Delta.

The project is being managed by TRLF youth volunteers, and include fishery, beekeeping, poultry farming, rabbits, local food and fruit crops. In 2014 the youth will be purchasing 5 goats to start a livestock project.

#### b) Beneficiaries

Local communities in Tana Delta

#### c) Impact and results to date

The banana, bee keeping and poultry projects are now self-financing and generate enough income to pay for their direct running costs. Another three projects, i.e. rabbits, goats and fishery are expected to be self-financing by the first half of 2014.

The project has provided the surrounding local community with a model for initiating their own small scale sustainable agricultural projects, giving dignity to many as they provide their families with better nutrition through their own effort and knowledge. The Ministry of Fisheries has also been able to use the TRLF farm as a venue for training members of the local community on aquaculture.

The project has given the youth invaluable first hand training in entrepreneurial skills resulting in reduced exploitation by middle-men and financial losses due to the lack of knowledge. Over the years, the sustainable agriculture project has become an excellent tool in teaching the youth the importance of self-reliance and diligence towards achieving a better quality of life. It has helped them learn and internalize accountability of work responsibilities and financial matters. The current batch of youth volunteers is able to manage the project with minimum supervision resulting in it becoming an excellent management training tool. These factors lay the foundation for a more responsible, committed and just leadership in the future.

## **2. Community-based Entrepreneurship Programs**

#### a) Project Description

TRLF runs two entrepreneurship programmes involving youth and women, i.e. **Youth Entrepreneurial Scheme (YES)** and the **Mitumba Project**. Both projects help members of the local communities find solutions to overcome challenges they face in raising their families through business related activities.





The **YES** is aimed at helping youths start and run small scale businesses effectively and efficiently. Most rural entrepreneurial schemes fail because of poor management due to insufficient knowledge, or communal practices which place a heavy burden on the owner of the small business. Currently, several youths have registered small businesses doing mobile phone repairs, electrical wiring, tailoring, food sales and sundry shop, which enable them support their families independently.

**‘Mitumba’** which means recycled goods in Kiswahilli, is a project that enables rural households to earn additional income for their household needs. Every year specific used items are collected from supporters in Singapore and Malaysia and shipped over to Tana Delta for resale by the local women. Other items are sold locally in Singapore at jumble sales where the proceeds finance the shipment of these goods to Kenya. Through the sales of these recycled items in Tana Delta, the enterprising spirits of these villagers are honed; the health and education of their families are improved.



*Recycled good collection in Singapore*

#### b) Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries were selected based on their actual household situations. In 2013, we received over 100 applications from women with diverse needs. They were interviewed and 56 women were shortlisted. These included women who are supporting siblings, children or grandchildren in secondary schools or colleges, or women with family members requiring urgent medical attention. A few places were given to women to help them stabilize small scale businesses.

#### c) Impact and results to date

This scheme empowers rural households to find solutions for their own problems. Aid is provided in the form that enables autonomy in decision making. This preserves the dignity of the receiver as the assistance is rendered in a fashion similar to a bank loan or credit facility. In addition, it provides donors from Singapore a chance to participate directly in the lives of rural families in the Tana Delta district.

This year the participants have had excellent credit history for the stock of goods that they have taken, no bad debts were incurred. The youths in charge of administering this program have been very efficient in planning, disbursing and accounting for the stock and collections. This is yet another example of a project that has both immense direct and indirect benefits. Through running the program the youth volunteers learn the values of honesty and accountability, all part of preparing people to lead their communities.

### **3. Youth Integral Formation Programmes**

#### a) Project Description

Some of the perennial problems facing communities in the Tana Delta can be attributed to a lack of honest and responsible leadership. The Youth Formation Programme is aimed at mentoring between 10 to 15 youth every year to nurture them mature into responsible, honest and generous adults who can be positive agents of change for their own rural communities.

These youth have completed secondary education and have requested for sponsorship for their tertiary education. In the interim, they volunteer as interns with TRLF for an 18 month period. During this time they are trained in various areas including office skills, agricultural skills, finance, public speaking and participation in community development activities. There is a strong emphasis on the development of their moral values,



in areas concerning integrity, faithfulness, generosity, mutual respect, responsibility, good-judgment, conscience and a curiosity to seek out answers in life.

During this time, the youth are taught to manage small amounts of money as they are exposed to practical aspects of life outside the Delta through educational trips. This enables them to internalize positive values so that when find themselves in positions of responsibility after graduation, they will work to bring positive change to their larger communities.

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#### b) Beneficiaries

Youth from all over Tana Delta and their families.

#### c) Impact and results to date

TRLF incurs low overheads of 9% of total project expenditure per year. In order to carry out all the intervention programs outlined above, volunteer manpower has been essential. In the short term, the youth formation program helps provide the needed manpower to successfully implement TRLF programmes.



*Gabriel with youth of TRLF, the future leaders of the community*

In the middle term, this program helps prepare the youth to fully utilize their opportunities when they go on for tertiary studies. In most cases, when rural youth move to study in urban centers for the first time in their life, they tend to be unprepared for the culture shock. This affects their studies and diminishes the benefits of the sponsorship assistance. By being given the time and opportunity to prepare for life outside the Delta over an 18 month period, these youth often mature in wisdom and outlook. This contributes positively to their performance and focus at tertiary level.

In the longer term, this program provides a base for a future pool of committed professional staff, volunteers as well as donors from within the beneficiary community who will be able to contribute and participate in the implementation of TRLF projects in future.



### Garsen High School Girls' Football Team

TRLF sponsored the uniforms and participation of 4 district teams at the 2008 provincial ball games



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# DONORS & THIRD PARTY ENDORESEMENTS



## Donors

### Private Individuals

### Educational Institutions

Holy Innocents High School, Singapore  
CHIJ St. Theresa's Convent, Singapore  
Crescent Girls Secondary School, Singapore  
Catholic High School, Singapore  
Maris Stella High School, Singapore  
Raffles Institution, Singapore  
St Joseph's Institution, Singapore  
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Malaysia

### Religious Institutions

Wesley Methodist Church Melaka, Malaysia  
Wesley Methodist Church Johor Bahru, Malaysia  
Catholic Diocese of Melaka-Johor, Malaysia  
Wesley Methodist Church, Singapore  
WSCS Methodist Church, Singapore  
Parish of the Nativity of the BVM, Singapore

### Charitable Institutions

Jonaron Foundation, Malaysia  
The Shepherd's Cove, Singapore  
Toh Kian Chui Foundation, Singapore  
The Binjai Tree, Singapore

### Private Companies

AEDAS Pte Ltd, Singapore  
ARUP Singapore Pte Ltd, Singapore  
LAC Engineers & Associates, Singapore  
KPK Quantity Surveyors, Singapore  
AGEIS Building and Engineering Pte Ltd, Singapore  
August Pictures Pte Ltd, Singapore  
Radiance Communications Pte Ltd, Singapore  
Virars Rehabilitation Centre, Singapore  
Accenture Pte Ltd, Singapore  
Cambridge Industrial Trust, Singapore  
True North Leadership Asia LLP, Singapore,  
Palate Sensations, Singapore  
Gallery Helios Pte Ltd, Singapore  
Halia Restaurant, Singapore  
Kitchen Capers, Singapore  
Xotiq Chocolatier, Singapore

## Third Party Endorsements

### Channel News Asia

<http://www1.channelnewsasia.com/amlive/2012/03/14/inter-views-charity-work/>

### The Star

<http://www.thestar.com.my/story.aspx?file=%2f2012%2f12%2f12%2fmetroperak%2f12441045&sec=metroperak>  
<http://thestar.com.my/lifestyle/story.asp?file=/2012/6/18/life-focus/11252255&sec=lifefocus>

### Gabriel on 938 Live

August 2011:

[http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301\\_000002/audio/MDC110802-0000003.mp3](http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301_000002/audio/MDC110802-0000003.mp3)

6 August 2012:

[http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301\\_000002/audio/MDC120807-0000001.mp3](http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301_000002/audio/MDC120807-0000001.mp3)

7 August 2012:

[http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301\\_000002/audio/MDC120808-0000001.mp3](http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301_000002/audio/MDC120808-0000001.mp3)

8 August 2012:

[http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301\\_000002/audio/MDC120810-0000002.mp3](http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301_000002/audio/MDC120810-0000002.mp3)

9 August 2012:

[http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301\\_000002/audio/MDC120810-0000001.mp3](http://www.podcast.sg/radiopodcast/938/MDC110301_000002/audio/MDC120810-0000001.mp3)

### Everyday Heroes

<http://video.xin.msn.com/watch/video/episode-4/1dk52mz6m>

### BFM 88.9 Kuala Lumpur

<http://www.bfm.my/the-tana-river-life-foundation.html>

### Youtube Videos

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHsBmq6CSnQ>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXoLk9sf3kc>  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5R\\_qghwU1k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5R_qghwU1k)





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# TRLF IN ACTION



*Recycled goods project – distribution & sales by Dziavye women's community based organization*



*Donors visiting the homes of TRLF youth*



*TRLF youth cleaning up donated chairs before using them in classrooms*



*Students of Garsen High School happy to mingle with the volunteers*



*Gabriel with the TRLF-sponsored graduating students of UTAR, Malaysia 2010*



*Gabriel out on excursion with TRLF youths*



*Ubuntu held in April 2013 – a fundraising event held in Singapore in aid of TRLF*



*Donation of sanitary pads to the poorest students through YWCA Tana Delta*



*TRLF students picking up their subsidized school supplies*





## Gabriel addressing the UTAR Convocation in Malaysia in August 2013

Over 1,950 students graduated from UTAR University in August 2013. Gabriel Teo, Founding Trustee of Tana River Life Foundation, Kenya was one of the invited guests-of-honour for the convocation. He addressed the graduating students and offered them insights into the world as they took their first step out of school and into life.

“Never ever put learning in the box. Always try and learn and discover more about life, yourself and the world. Know that everyone has a value. For some, this inherent value has been subdued, or blocked, or masked away. I have learnt my greatest lessons in life both from people who are more educated than myself as well as those who are less,” advised Gabriel Teo to the students.

It was a momentous occasion for proud families and relatives of graduates as they responded positively to the speeches of guests-of-honors and celebrated the joyous moment with their loved ones.

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## Be An Agent of Change

To make a donation, be a volunteer or discuss further opportunities to be an agent of change through Tana River Life Foundation, please contact Gabriel Teo at [gabrielteo@yahoo.com](mailto:gabrielteo@yahoo.com).

Bank Details are as follow:

|                |                              |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| Account Name   | : Tana River Life Foundation |
| Account Number | : 0240077344101              |
| Bank           | : CFC Stanbic Bank           |
| Branch         | : Mombassa – Kenya           |
| Currency       | : USD                        |
| Swift Code     | : SBICKENX                   |







### **Tana River Life Foundation**

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