

Kenya

Working to achieve water security for Nairobi

Supplying 95 percent of Nairobi's drinking water, the Upper Tana River Basin is critical to the Kenyan economy, but farming and industry are major threats to this vital freshwater source.

The context

The Upper Tana River Basin is of great importance to the Kenyan economy. As well as being a vital source of drinking water, it sustains important aquatic biodiversity and enables agricultural activities that feed millions of Kenyans. But over-cultivation has threatened sustainability and the unchecked expansion of farming, quarrying and dirt road construction has led to land degradation that consequently affects the main reservoirs that provide half the country's hydropower output.

The action

The Upper Tana-Nairobi Water Fund was created to implement a holistic set of conservation activities that increase water yields, reduce sediment loadings, and promote sustainable food production while increasing household incomes in farming communities. By involving key stakeholder groups, the Water Fund was able to design a collective action program to produce meaningful results.

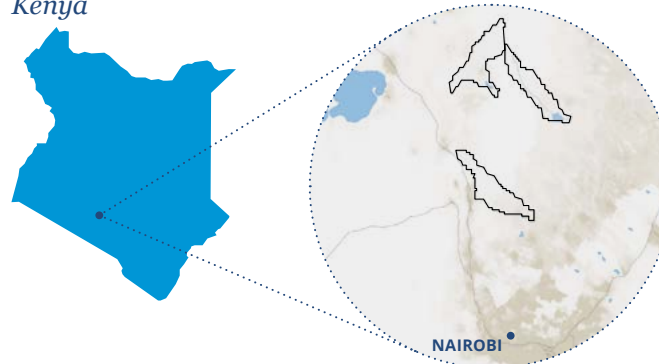
The future

To date, the Water Fund has worked with over 15,000 farmers by collaborating with local partners, including the Green Belt Movement and the Kenya National Farmers Federation; some have received support in implementing soil and water conservation structures on their farms in the Thika-Chania sub-watershed; more than 1,000 are adopting water-harvesting structures in the Maragua sub-watershed; and 7,000 coffee farmers have been recruited to adopt soil and watershed conservation practices in the Sagana-Gura sub-watershed, equipping them with the skills to apply for certification by the Rainforest Alliance.

By conservative estimates, the watershed interventions selected through TNC's research could deliver a two-to-one ROI on average over a 30-year timeframe and the target, by 2025, is to work with a total of 300,000 farmers



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By 2001, the Masinga reservoir had already lost an estimated 158 million cubic meters of storage volume due to siltation rates, twice as high as the reservoir was designed to accommodate.

Read the full story at: global.nature.org/content/beyond-the-source

Lead the way to a secure water future with the Water Funds Toolbox

What are Water Funds?

A Water Fund is a framework that enables cities, communities and companies to invest in the management of the landscapes where their water is sourced; so that upstream forests and wetlands are protected to continue naturally cleaning and filtering water. Upstream communities can benefit from enhanced livelihoods and improvements to health and wellbeing whilst downstream communities experience improved water quality and, in many cases, fewer disruptions and shortages.

What is the Water Funds Toolbox?

The Water Funds Toolbox is a step-by-step online guide for developing a Water Fund. It features videos, testimonials, templates, tools, case studies and much more. The heart of the toolbox is the Water Fund Project Cycle, which outlines the five phases that take a Water Fund from feasibility through to maturity.



Ready to make a difference?

Develop your knowledge

Through the Water Funds Toolbox you can access the state of the art curriculum for developing Water Funds. Authored by Water Funds practitioners for practitioners.

Curriculum includes:

- Water Funds 101
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Action Planning
- Courses specific to governance, science, finance, implementation and communications

nature.org/WaterFundsTraining

Build your network

Join the global community of Water Funds practitioners working to apply and refine the Water Fund model around the world.

Network activities:

- Webinars
- Discussion boards
- News
- Member profiles
- Recognition programs
- Network-wide competitions
- Peer learning & review

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Water Fund Project Cycle

1

Feasibility

Defining the problem, attracting partners and hiring the WF Director

2

Design

Developing a strategic plan with solutions and establishing the WF governance

3

Creation

Formalizing the WF structure and official launching

4

Operation

Developing and implementing annual work plans

5

Maturity

Securing the WF's long-term viability and creating large-scale impacts