

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2017

2017 was the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development as declared by the United Nations. In view of this world concern we felt that there was need for us to focus strongly on our sustainable pillars for development. As part of our sustainability agenda our four main sustainability pillars are community tourism, conservation, education and livelihood.

Though the above four pillars are our blueprint, we decided that for 2017 our main focus would be on the education pillar, focusing both on internal and external education development. We then set out to develop new projects that would run concurrently with our existing projects under the education pillar.

EXTERNAL EDUCATION

Keep Her In School

As previously reported, we do run a program where we supply sanitary towels to a secondary school in Nanyuki (Kalalu Secondary). The aim of the program as the name suggests is to ensure that girls do remain in school during their menstrual period. The initiative was started after we learnt that girls were missing school due to lack of sanitary towels therefore their school performance was affected negatively. As a solution, we the staff of ULGT agreed that we would each contribute a specific amount per month and the company would match the amount raised by the staff, thereafter purchase sanitary towels that would be distributed in the secondary school thus ensuring the girls stayed in school and got a fair chance to the boys. This program has been running since 2015, and ever since then we monitor the school attendance registry and girls attendance has since improved, also we can confirm that for the past 3 years the girls have dominated top performance in the National Exam in Kalalu Secondary School.

Schools Environmental Project

In Nanyuki area, we work with 5 different schools of which 4 are primary schools and serve as feeder schools to Kalalu Secondary. In 2016, we engaged the 5 schools into a conservation and sustainability training done by AFEW in Nairobi, where we sponsored 10 teachers for their transport and accommodation, plus field study on better ways of conservation and sustainability. The 10 teachers were split into 2 groups, one group consisted of environment/ sciences teachers and the second group was the head teachers of the 5 schools. Later in 2016 as a follow up we would get each school to participate by initiating sustainability projects in their schools and the school that had the best project was awarded with a bus load trip to the neighbouring Ol Pejeta Conservancy.

As a follow up to this project, in 2017 we yet again challenged the 5 schools into an essay competition on “why their river was drying up” and the best essay would be awarded by ULGT. The concept was that we would bring the children and their teachers into realization of the importance of conservation and how their environment was critically important to their basic livelihoods. Once the students wrote their essays, we ULGT staff read and judged which we felt were the best and awarded the winners with environmental conservation books.



Schools Tree Planting

In June, Alan Dixon visited 3 schools in the Nanyuki area to plant trees. He and the students planted 80 trees in Kalalu Secondary, and 25 in both Umandi and Ndemu Primary schools. The trees were planted by the form 1 students at Kalalu, and standard 5 students at the primary schools. The idea being that the students can now care for their tree through the next four years whilst they continue at that school. The species of trees planted were chosen so as to be beneficial to the children on maturity in the schools feeding program, such as avocado and orange trees, as well as indigenous Cedar trees, and some exotic Grevillea. This activity and project falls under our Conservation and Education pillars.



Product Watch, now renamed Utali Bora

ULGT and Sustainable Travel and Tourism Agenda (STTA) created a new project, the Product Watch. This is a program where STTA engages interns and university students who are involved in their various student programs to visit tourist attractions within Nairobi, rate their sustainability level and

submit a written report. Two locations were visited each month from February to June, and a report made on each by two students. As an incentive ULGT would give KES 1,500 towards each visit amounting to KES 3,000 per month, ongoing. This initiative has now been renamed to Utali Bora, and has a reporting blog run and published by STTA.

Young Change Makers

STTA and ULGT ventured into yet another partnership under the STTA Monthly Student Seminars (IYSTD), where seminars are held at various tourism colleges and universities, and the student who submits the best report is awarded KES 3000, sponsored by ULGT. Two awards are made each month.

INTERNAL EDUCATION

STTA Sustainability Trainings

Sustainable Travel and Tourism Agenda (STTA) gave talks to our staff, explaining more what Sustainability actually means, and why we should live and preach these standards. This “internal education” helps increase our understanding of the matter of sustainability, builds capacity and in turn “best practices” within our organisation, as well as helping in the “external education” of the same. The trainings are conducted every 6 months therefore ensuring that our staff are up to date matters pertaining to sustainability.



ULGT and SIB (Sustainable Inclusive Business) Partnership

On 26th April, six ULGT staff attended the **2nd Private sector conference on Sustainable Inclusive Business**. This included talks and workshops, extending our “Internal education”. Angela made a presentation in one of the workshops, thus contributing to external education. As a follow up to the conference, we invited Karin Boomsma of Sustainable Inclusive Business Kenya (SIB) and Elfriek Van

Galen of The Rock Group, Netherlands, two organizations that train and guide businesses in becoming Sustainable inclusive, to give a talk to our staff on how we can become more of a Sustainable Inclusive company.

The 3rd Green Summit

On 14 and 15th June we participated in the 3rd Green Tourism Summit in Africa. Three of our staff attended the summit and Alan made a presentation on “The journey towards being a Sustainable Tour Operator.” This summit provided internal education for the staff and included external education through the presentation by our MD.

Sustainable Travel Committee and Carbon reporting

Through our sustainable agenda planning, it became increasingly evident that we required a broader outlook than Sustainable Tourism, one that would include the whole range of travel, including air travel and other modes of transport, some of the major contributors to our carbon footprint. A new committee was formed to work on Sustainable Travel. Over the one year, the committee did an extensive research on sustainable travel and their findings would be used to better our products such as advise us on which airlines were the most sustainable thus we would in-turn promote those airlines more in our sales. This committee also engaged our technology partners Amadeus in creating carbon tracking reports to our corporates, where we would advise them on how much their carbon footprint was and to an extent advise them on how they can counter act on it, e.g by planting trees etc.

Eco-Warrior Award Winners – SDG4

In October 2017, we were yet again crowned winners of the highly prestigious Eco Warrior Awards. This time the criteria was different since the judges were looking at the 17 SDG’s and awarding according to the goal which they felt you as a company were succeeding in attaining. We won in the SDG 4 category, which is sustainability in promoting **Quality Education**.

2017 Expenditure

Keep Her in School	KES 56,320
ULGT and STTA Product Watch	KES 30,000
ULGT and STTA Monthly student Seminars	KES 30,000
Schools Tree Planting	KES 21,000
SIB Conference + Green Summit	KES 60,000
TOTAL	KES 197,320

CONCLUSION:

Being a sustainable inclusive business is a company that is future proof. It means that you are ready to brace yourself for the future regardless of what the general business circumstances are. For us as ULGT, being sustainable should go beyond our office to being the daily practice by our staff, and on into the communities we interact and engage with. We are in a trade where our products are directly linked to our communities through tourism, and on the hand in travel, we are among the top in creating carbon emissions. Therefore, practicing responsible travel and tourism is not a choice but it is a must practice for ULGT. Simply put, we believe sustainability is in our DNA.

