**Sudanese Environment Conservation Society (SECS)**

**UNESCO- World Heritage Volunteers 2014**

***Action for Sustainability***

**WHV- Public Awareness about the Importance of Dinder National Park in Local Communities**

***May,2014***

**Introduction:**

The World Heritage Volunteers (WHV) initiative was conceived in 2007 in the framework of the UNESCO World Heritage Education Programme, to mobilize and involve youth and their organizations in heritage preservation and promotion. Annually 55 projects are selected from the world which organized by local organizations and NGOs.

In January 2014 the Sudanese Environment Conservation Society (SECS) have applied for the WHV’s 2014 campaign. SECS’s project- Public Awareness about the Importance of Dinder National Park- have been selected by the UNESCO World Heritage in March 2014. This WHV 2014 campaign aimed to:

1. Raise awareness of local and international volunteers as well as the local communities about issues related to World Heritage, sustainable development and biodiversity; and put accent on activities in natural World Heritage sites;
2. Integrate hands-on skills training activities on basic conservation and preservation techniques in WHV 2014 projects;
3. Link-up with local youth organizations, the local communities, the site management, national and local authorities and establish cooperative relations and partnership with to improve project towards sustainable results;
4. Share best practices for the development of non-formal education tools by documenting new approaches to promote World Heritage.

**Dinder National Park: Background**

The Dinder National Park (DNP), area 10292 Km ², is one of the first protected areas established in Sudan in 1935. DNP was declared as a biosphere reserve in 1978 and as a Ramsar Site in 2002. It is a fly way for migratory birds and represents an Ecotone between Ethiopian plateau and dry savannah areas. It is also an archaeological site (several Pharaonic sites and linking Merowe civilization to Aksum civilization). The DNP has a rich biodiversity and supports number of the threatened species. The habitat and wildlife in DNP is currently described as badly degraded and under serious threats primarily that resulted fromthe negative human activities such as; grazing, illegal hunting and poaching, fishing, honey collection, cutting trees…, etc.

**Project Aims:**

* Promoting the sense of conservation among the local communities.

**Project Objectives:**

* Enlighten the local communities about the importance of DNP with more focuses on the threats that facethe DNP which resulted from human activities inside the park.
* Reduce conflicts and build confidence between the pastoralists and the park authorities.
* Instill the sense of conservation the DNP on the future generation.

**Target Groups:**

Target groups are communities living around DNP, with emphasis on:

* Children.
* Youth.
* Women.
* Pastoralists group.
* Farmers.
* Hunters.
* Honey collectors.

**The Means:**

* Puppet theatre.
* Open air theatre.
* Films show.
* Gallery photos.
* Posters.
* Environmental songs.
* Painting.

**Sudanese Environment Conservation Society (SECS):**

The Sudanese Environment Conservation Society SECS was officially registered in 1975 at the Humanitarian Aid Commission, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs as a pioneer national environmental NGO. Its goal is to achieve sustainable development through participation of all stakeholders in environmental conservation.

SECS depends for the implementation of its activities on volunteers with emphasis on the youth members.Volunteer work represents one of the pillars for the implementation of SECS activities. All interventions will be designed in such a way that ensures the active contribution of volunteers so that SECS achieves the objective of giving its endeavors a popular dimension. Volunteering will be encouraged, regulated and motivated. It also seeks to mobilize wide community participation in the management of natural resources and implementation of environmental rehabilitation interventions.

**Partners:**

**Eastern Nile Watershed Management Project –Sudan Component:**

Community water shed management project with it is specific objective for protection of land and water, aims to enhance the environment, increase the awareness of different stakeholders toward protection of natural resources. This component would be implemented in different areas in Sudan including Dinder. Natural resource management is a subcomponent in the project. Its objective is to strengthen the management of natural resources in the targeted communities, particularly forests and rangelands that are under pressure from overexploitation and overgrazing.

**Wildlife Conservation General Administration (WCGA):**

The WCGA is a governmental institution which is responsible for conserving the wildlife and the protected areas in Sudan.

**Team members:**

The teams of the project were consisted of 12 members; all are volunteers of the SECS. The selection was based on the following:

* Experience in working with the local communities.
* Qualifications in the relevant subjects related to the project goals and activities.
* Attendance of the preparatory activities.

(List of team members as appendix)

**Project duration:**

* Preparatory activities: 23th March- 8th April/ 2014.
* Campaign implementation: 10th May- 15th May/2014.

**Preparatory activities:**

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| **Activity** | **Date** | **Purpose** | **Outcome** | **Participants** |
| Meeting | 22/3/2014 | * Identify project activates. * Identify target villages. * Searching for finance. | * Project’s activities were identified. * Target villages were identified. * Project finance was secured. | * 8 persons have attended the meeting were representing: * UNESCO (Man and Biosphere Programme) * Sudanese wildlife society. * Wildlife Research Center. * WCGA * SECS. |
| Meeting | 24/3/2014 | * Enlighten the SECS’s volunteers about the project proposal. * Selecting the team for the project. | * A presentation was presented to volunteers. * The project’s team was selected. * Proposal was revised. | * 12 persons (SECS’s volunteers) have attended the meeting. |
| Workshop | 30/4/2014 | * Introducing the volunteers about the importance and threats of DNP. * Display the experience of the Dinder national park development project (2000-2004). * Promoting the communication skills with the local communities for the team. | * A presentation about the importance of DNP and its threats was presented by Ms. Khalida Abu Zaid. * A presentation about the DNP development project was presented by Mr. Adil M. Ali. * Tips and skills about communication with local communities in the DNP were presented by Mr. Suliman M. Ibrahim. | * 18 persons (SECS’s volunteers) have attended the workshop. |
| Lecture | 1/4/2014 | * Introducing the team by the project of the community watershed management inside and around the DNP. | * A lecture about the project of the community watershed management was presented by Ms. Ghada Ibrahim. | * 14 persons (SECS’s volunteers) have attended the lecture |
| Workshop | 7/4/2014 | * Preparation and production of environmental awareness messages which will be used for posters and the theatre show to help in achieving the project’s objective. | * Environmental awareness messages that serve the project’s objectives were developed. * Posters were designed by Mr. Mohamed Sahaby and Mr. Monem Abedalraheem. | * 13 persons (SECS’s volunteers) have attended the workshop. |
| Workshop | 7/4/2014  8/4/2014 | * Maintenance of puppets. * Training for both puppet theatre and open theatre. | * Puppets were maintained. * The team was practiced for puppet theatre and open theatre by the trainer Mr. Hamad Elneel Khalifa. | * 6 persons (SECS’s volunteers) have attended the workshop. |

**Project activities:**

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| **Date** | **Time** | **Place** | **Activity** | **Target groups** | **No. of participants** | **Notices** |
| 11/5/2014 | 12:00pm-2:00pm | Billo village | * Puppet theatre show. * Pictures exhibition. | Children, women, youth, men | 200 persons (70% are children). | * A Local translator has used in the puppet theatre. * Participants have interacted very well with the pictures exhibition (especially men). |
| 11/5/2014 | 4:30 pm- 6:00 pm | Um-Kakar village | * Speeches presented from: SECS, WCGA and Community Watershed Management project * Puppet theatre show. * Pictures exhibition. | Children, women, youth, men | 230 persons | * Women participation in the discussion. \*They requested schools for their children and clean drinking water. |
| 12/5/2014 | 9:00 am- 4:00 pm | Galguo camp | * Workshop for conflict resolution and confidence building between pastoralists and WCGA’s forces. | * WCGA’s forces. * Pastoralists from Gadarif state and Sennar state. | 45 persons | * Discussion groups created dialogue environment between the target groups. |
| 12/5/2014 | 5:00 pm-7:30 pm | DNP | * Enlightenment visit for the DNP | * The team | 12 persons | * The visit included Abdel-Ghani and Ras Amer Mayas. |
| 13/5/2014 | 8:00 am- 2:00 pm | Bandegu ( Primary school for girls and boys) | * Enlightenment introduction for each class about the project. * Painting workshop. * Puppet theatre. * Pictures exhibition. | * Boys and girls pupils of the school. | 450 pupils | * 5 pupils from each class were selected for the painting workshop. * Pupils have interacted very well with the puppet theatre show. |
| 13/5/2014 | 7:30 pm- 10:00 pm | Bandegu club | * Films show: * The last heaven. * Dinder national park. * A film on desertification; Gergakh (South-Darfur). * Discussion. | * Children, women, youth, men | 540 persons | * The activity was very attractive for Bandegue’s community. |
| 14/5/2014 | 10:00 am- 12:00 pm | Bandegu market | * Open air theatre. * Picturesexhibition. | * Children, women, youth, men | 300-500 persons | * The open air theatre created discussion about the DNP between the participants. * The pictures exhibition was attractive for the different target groups. |

**Strengths:**

* Well interaction from the target groups with the different activities (picture exhibition, theatre, films show) in the three villages: Billo, Um-Kakar and Bandegu.
* All the activities created effective discussion and dialogue with the target groups.
* The workshop concluded with recommendations set out by all the participants.
* A follow-up committee for the workshop was selected which consist of representative from all stakeholders and partners (2 represent the Blue Nile’s pastoralists, 2 represent the Sennar’s pastoralists, 2 represents the Gadarif’s pastoralists, 1 represents the WGCA’s forces, 1 represents the Community watershed management project and 1 represents SECS).
* Volunteers were well coordinated and having a team spirit.

**Weakness:**

* Prior survey study for the project's area was needed to facilitate the implementation of project and save time and efforts.
* Better understanding about the needs of target groups was needed.
* Better planning for workshop was needed.

**Appendixes:**

* List of team members.
* Pictures.