

# The Children's Eco Village





# Vision Statement & Values

## Our Vision

To transform the future prospects of orphans through inspiring environmental and sustainable practices, to develop a family orientated community by upholding the values of the Children's Eco Village.

## Our Values What Keeps Us Strong

These are the core beliefs and attitudes on which the Children's Eco Village has been built, and they are the corner-stone of our success. These enduring values guide our actions, decisions and relationships as we work towards fulfilling our mission.

## Responsibility towards Our Environment

We are committed to sustainability and acting in an environmentally friendly way by holistically integrating environmentalism and sustainability into all of our operations in the Children's Eco Village.

## Respect towards Our Communities and Partners

We respect people for who they are and for their perspectives, skills and experience to broaden our knowledge to help develop communities and create strong relationships

## Inspiring Confidence and Independence

We are committed to improving the confidence and inspiring people to become more independent through concepts of empowerment.

## Learning and Development

We are committed towards continuous learning and development through integrating learning within our organisational culture, systems, processes and procedures



# The Children's Eco Village

To go through childhood without the protection and care of a parent or guardian is one of the most unimaginable and traumatic experiences a child can be subjected to. There are 53 million children living without parents in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In Tanzania, there are 3.1 million orphans. Of these, 1.2 million have been orphaned by Aids (source: Unicef 2012). Orphan children are often exposed, vulnerable to exploitation and left with no option but to fend for themselves or be dependent on the generosity of sponsors.



The Children's Eco Village is located in the Mkurunga district, south of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and is a ground-breaking initiative which began in March 2012 to help tackle this issue and make a lasting positive impact of the lives for some of these children. The village was set up to provide homes for the most susceptible of children giving them the opportunity to grow and develop within a healing and sustaining natural environment.



The Children's Eco Village ultimately aims to:

- Facilitate the children's growth in an empathic family setting which is crucial to their nurturing needs.
- Provide a secure base for their physical, psychological and emotional growth.
- Ensure their attendance at elementary school and support them to excel in higher standards. Help the children acquire economic survival skills necessary to productive life as an adult.
- Develop an understanding of the natural environment and learn skills to live sustainably.
- Provide holistic community-based care that supports them into becoming socially integrated adults in society.

Set in the lush landscape of the East African coastal zone the natural surroundings are aimed at nurturing the physical, mental, social and spiritual growth and wellbeing of these children. The children are taught to live sustainably and in harmony with the natural environment and understand the value of good environmental practice. In this way, the village provides security and stability to one of the most vulnerable groups in society.

The buildings and structures of the children's homes are designed for low energy consumption while insuring functional and productive use of space. Adoption of renewable energy technologies, including waste management, recycling, permaculture and biogas insure a sustainable and productive environment.

The land around the village is developed using sustainable methods that will not only provide food security for the children and staff but will produce an income generation excess insuring the village is financially sustainable.

**There are over 3 million orphans in Tanzania, 1.2 million of these as a result of Aids**



# Children's Homes

Whereas orphanages can often mean cramped and restricted conditions which hinder a child's development, the children's homes aim to create a homely environment for upto 160 orphans. They will live with 'mothers' (one per home) where they will enjoy a sense of belonging, care, love and affection. As care-professionals, these guardians will recognise and respect the orphans' backgrounds and cultural roots while nurturing each child's development. The 'mothers' not only possess natural motherly instincts but they and their children will grow over time – day-by-day, touch-by-touch, with each tear, kiss and memory their lives will weave together into a tapestry of a new family.

Each of the homes will accommodate 10 children and one 'Mother'. Each home will have four bedrooms, a living room, a bathroom and a kitchen which has been designed to cater for the children's requirements.



Our goal is to provide living spaces that are low impact whilst providing a comfortable safe and homely environment as possible. Homes are clustered together to enhance the sense of community and togetherness.

The homes are designed to cause minimal damage to the environment whilst at the same time providing a high standard of living. This is achieved by building structures that are as energy efficient as possible making use of natural elements such as shade and natural ventilation.

The homes and infrastructure incorporate elements that ensure their construction and use has the lowest possible environmental impact.

In addition, wherever possible, renewable energy will be utilised such as wind, solar and biogas. The ongoing impact of the homes will be reduced through environmentally responsible waste management.

Growing up in such homes the children will learn that it is possible to live comfortably and safely in a low impact energy efficient built environment. In this way, the children will grow up with an awareness and knowledge of sustainable living.

Each home consists of:

- 10 Children
- 1 Mother
- Living Room
- Kitchen
- Dining Area
- 4 Bedrooms
- Bathroom/toilets



# Profiles



## Arafah Mushangama

Head Mother

Arafah Mushangama is a mother at the Children's Eco Village; she is humble and friendly in character and has an educational background in guidance and teaching methodology. She cares for the first 10 children at the Village providing the love, security and stability every child requires. She is very happy to serve the children as a mother and teaches them life skills.

*"It is a privilege to be in an eco-friendly environment like Kisemvule raising these beautiful children. I support the children mentally, physically and psychologically and I have faith that they will secure futures to become productive global citizens."*



## Tiba Rashid

9 Years Old, Children's Eco Village Orphan

Tiba Rashid is among the first 10 children living at the Children's Eco Village. She lost both of her parents in 2005 to HIV/AIDS when she was just a few months old. Following the deaths of her parents, Tiba was placed in custody of her ageing grandmother who likewise sadly passed away after 6 years. The next couple of years, Tiba had an unsettled upbringing, moving into different homes before becoming part of the Children's Eco Village family.

*"I was confused to where I was being taken and how life would be. When I saw the wonderful house, bed, food and settings in the Children's Eco Village I couldn't believe it. I like the soft mattresses, my room and caring environment the most. I enjoy roaming around nice places, trees and pets with my friends. We always eagerly wait for Sundays, so we can play hide and seek in the Village. I can't imagine a better life than this and I want to stay here always."*



## Laurian Mchau

The Eco village engineer

Laurian Mchau is a man passionate about the environment who has worked for many years as a self-styled researcher, innovator and manufacturer of products that use local techniques and recycled materials to produce solutions for affordable and sustainable living.

Laurian's speciality is locally-built wind turbines using scrap and locally sourced materials to produce turbines for power generation or to pump water. However, he has also developed a system for turning waste cardboard into slow burning briquettes that can be used for cooking as an alternative to less sustainable fuels such as gas and charcoal. These briquettes are burned in a stove of Laurian's design, again using recycled materials. Other projects include Fam Plastic which grows plants using recycled cardboard and an innovative water purifying system.

*"It is an honour to be working at the Children's Eco Village. At the village, I feel I have a unique opportunity to pass on my life time worth of knowledge to children and local farmers who will become the sustainable champions of the future"*

# Environmental Conservation

Poorer societies are the most vulnerable to the consequences of climate change and environmental degradation. Through promoting environmental conservation, the Children's Eco Village is playing an important part in helping local communities in coping with and reducing the effects of a changing climate. This resilience will ensure food security and help to reduce the cycle of poverty.

The increasing demand for energy is making it difficult to avoid climate change which is having a devastating impact on nature and the environment both locally and globally. It is however the rural communities in developing nations that suffer the majority of the consequences. Natural elements such as trees, fauna, landscape, streams and animals are a lifeline for communities. They provide resources such as water, food, material, medicine, employment and much more. The more the environment is destroyed, the more this leads to a lack of resources which in turn leads to poverty.



At the Children's Eco village, we understand the importance of spreading the message of sustainable development to the communities outside the village as well. We have a responsibility to the whole of the society into which our children will eventually go. The Children's Eco village is committed to exploring environmentally beneficial solutions that can be locally produced and utilised. It is hoped that moving forward the Eco Village will be a test site, education centre and knowledge sharing site for locally relevant sustainable technologies and practices.



## Water Conservation

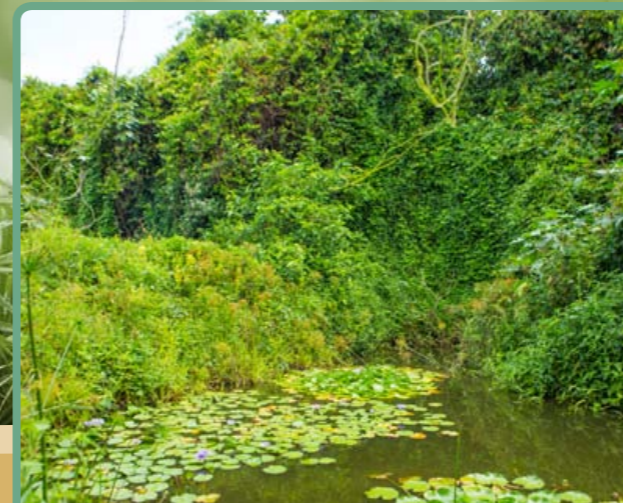
The village requires a minimum of 5000ltrs of water per day for drinking washing plus an additional 5000ltrs for livestock, farming and gardening purposes. Water conservation is vital in ensuring a sustainable supply of clean drinking water for the children and the needs of the farm whilst not negatively impacting the water supply of the surrounding villages.

The Village currently has two bore holes and water is pumped using renewable energy from solar wind power.

All staff have been trained in how to use the minimum amount of water and a number of water saving initiatives have been put in place.

## Soil Enrichment

The soil around the village provides a challenge for growing the crops as it is sandy and nutrient poor. This makes it the ideal site to demonstrate the affectedness of using natural methods such as permaculture to enrich soil in a way that does not require harmful and expensive chemicals fertilizers. Such methods have the potential to increase fertility suitably whilst enriching the soil for future generations.



## Rain Water Harvesting

Rainwater is collected from the roof of buildings to be used in the village taking pressure off the bore holes.

## Water Trees

Following traditional best practice, trees that are regarded as water retaining on the plot and are kept in place and the area around them is not cultivated..

## Ecological Protected Areas

Certain areas of the village have been set aside as nature reserves and these areas help to maintain the natural springs within them.

## Tree Nursery

A tree nursery has been developed in the village. The trees grown in the nursery not only provide a potential income stream for the village but also can be used in the local area to replace trees in the local for land clearance and fuel thereby combating the environmental consequences of deforestation in the local areas.

The nursery also allows local tree experts to grow endangered and rare trees which will ensure biodiversity in the local area going forward..



# Environmental Infrastructure

The Children's Eco Village features several developments that reflect the ecological ethos of the village with an emphasis on ensuring the site causes as little environmental impact as possible for a sustainable future.

## Wind Pump

A wind powered rope pump will provide water for the village. This will be constructed using local recycled materials and manufactured in such a way as local artisans will be able to build and maintain other such pumps.



The environmental projects are in line with our commitment to exploring environmentally beneficial solutions that can be locally produced and utilised. It is hoped that moving forward the children's eco village will be a test site, education centre and a knowledge sharing site for locally relevant sustainable technologies and practices.

## Biogas Plant

A Biogas plant will be built to process the potential gas from dung produced by the cattle providing a carbon neutral, non-polluting and renewable source of cooking gas for the village. The remaining slurry will form a clean enriched organic fertilizer.



## Guard Shelter

The guard shelter in the village is made of low impact renewable materials and is constructed using traditional local building methods.



## Kitchen Waste Management

**Wormeries:** Vegetable waste will be converted into chicken and fish food in the form of worms and into enriched organic compost for the house kitchen gardens.

The compost produced in the wormery is a result of the digestion process of the humble earthworms. This 'vermicompost' can contain five times more nitrogen, seven times more phosphorus and eleven times more potassium than ordinary soil.



## Wind Turbine

Building of a 15 KW wind turbine to produce electricity to supplement existing solar power. As with the water pump this will be constructed using local recycled materials and manufactured in such a way as local artisans will be able to build and maintain other such pumps.



## Kitchen Waste Management

**Maggot Farm:** Maggots will break down meat waste transforming it into organic compost which can also be used as on organic compost for the house kitchen gardens. Maggots can be harvested and used as feed for fish and poultry. The adult flies will in turn become trapped thus reducing the fly problem within the farm. The maggot farm thus represents a method of pest control and also a natural, sustainable and environmentally friendly food source.



# Eco-Friendly Farming

The Village operates with the vision of giving back more energy and materials to the community than is consumed, through training locals to adopt permaculture practices, poultry farming and livestock rearing. The farm will ultimately improve the local economy by providing jobs, generating income and improving food security within the village.

## Permaculture Farming

The Children's Eco Village has implemented permaculture farming within overall plans of the village. It offers ecological principles of farming processes instead of man-made and potentially destructive methods that can harm the earth. In the current climate, where the population is rapidly increasing and natural resources are becoming scarce, the village will be able to provide sustainable living and ecological food production.

By ensuring that food production at the very least does not deplete the land but at best improves it, naturally the permaculture farm provides a path to sustainable food security for the village.

## Livestock and Poultry

Livestock and poultry farms aim to increase the children's nutritional intake, assist the growth of vegetables using manure, and income generation to the sale of livestock, poultry, organic eggs, and milk.

The following livestock provide the children with organically produced, meat, fish, poultry, milk and honey.

- Cattle
- Goats
- Fish
- Chickens
- Guinea Fowl
- Bees

**The farm will improve food security, provide jobs and generate income**



**The farm will be a hub for quality food production in the area**





## Duck & Fish Ponds

The Village's 12 ponds are used to capture water (rainwater, kitchen and shower water) that would otherwise be wasted, through swales as used in permaculture designs. The ponds are home to a variety of fish and offer a pleasant and cool environment for poultry reared on the farm.

## Fencing

Fencing is mandatory under Tanzanian law for orphan-related institutions. As a result, rather than constructing a dull single barrier, the Village's fence is built to be multi-functional. It provides a platform for planting herbal shrubs, fruit trees and trellis creating a vertical gardening system of beans, peas, cucumbers, tomatoes and morning glories.

## Village Office

The village office is set in the centre of the children's eco village. The office operates as the central point of the village operation. The office is made from material that otherwise would have been thrown away.

## Farm Plastic

One of the eco-projects found at the Children's Eco Village is "Farm Plastic" which produces food from recycled materials. This is an example of a locally developed innovation aimed at providing food security under challenging conditions. Farm plastic uses discarded plastic containers to grow food in urban areas or where soil is poor. Plants are grown in a compost that is produced using recycled cardboard. The cardboard is processed through washing a decomposition into a fertile growing compost.

Projects such as farm plastic serve as a testbed and education resources for developing resilience in changing environmental conditions.

# Eco Mosque

The area in which the village is situated is primarily Muslim and so an Eco Mosque has been built as part of the Children's Village complex, for the use of members of the village and surrounding community. The Eco Mosque is open to all. People of different faiths and none are all always equally welcome in this building that provides a serene space of prayer or quiet reflection.



The eco mosque represents a built reflection of the ethos of the Children's Eco Village providing an environmentally friendly backbone to the community with environmental features and a unique union of the local community and their faith based responsibility as caretakers of their natural environment.

The eco mosque is the first religious institution of its kind in the region. The same model will be replicated for other religious institutes around the area.

The eco mosque can accommodate a congregation of up to 160 people. The structure is strategically built on high ground allowing the flow of wind, sunlight and water collection. The building uses green technologies, including solar power to ensure efficient energy management



## Ramadhan Makuka

Eco Mosque Imam

Ramadhan Makuka is the Imam (spiritual leader) of the Children's Eco Village. He is jovial and friendly in character. He participates in the Village's advisory board and the external community. He leads the congregational prayers at the Village's mosque and closely works with management to ensure the moral upbringing of the village workers and children.

*"It is an honour to be part of village team as the spiritual leader (Imam). I have learnt so much about caring for the environment ever since I joined the community. Although I have extensive religious knowledge, being at the eco village has enabled me to make a connection between the religious teachings and the environment. I never knew about permaculture. But being in the Village has enabled me to understand this method through training programmes and courses and now, I am teaching others regarding the importance of being protectors of the environment."*

The main features of the Eco Mosque are:

- **Reduces Noise Pollution**  
The architects have created a natural echo in the prayer hall, eliminating the need for a microphone
- **Natural Ventilation**  
The large windows and ventilation allow enough light and air to circulate through the mosque, reducing the need for electrical fans
- **Solar Energy**  
Used for lights, fans and motors for water pumps if required
- **Rainwater Harvesting**  
There are three water collection tanks where the water will be used for ablution before prayer
- **Re-Use of Ablution Water**  
The waste water from the mosque is taken directly to the gardens and is re-used to irrigate a fruit and vegetable garden



# Community Engagement & Development

The children's eco village is surrounded by various other communities and villages. Involving those communities and collaborating with them is the cornerstone of our efforts to improve people's quality of life and to promote environmental sustainability in the region. It is an opportunity for us to learn from each other's practices.

## Water Wells

The main source of water for the surrounding villages originated from where the eco village is now situated. As the eco village is required to be fenced off, we have provided water wells to all of the surrounding villages so that they continue to have access to clean and safe drinking water.



## Trees for Change

The children's eco village is delivering local tree planting campaigns to preserve the local environment. We have more than 80,000 trees of different species, with over 30,000 trees having been planted in neighbouring villages

## Home Based Orphans

The village aims to support orphans living near the area, we provide regular food provisions and other seasonal care requirements as necessary. We support just over 100 orphans in villages surrounding the eco village.



## Food Distribution

The village provides seasonal food provisions at various times throughout the year. Approx 150 families per year benefit with food supplies for a month.

## Permaculture & Beekeeping

The eco village is keen on promoting the practice of the ecological principles of farming instead of using potentially destructive methods that can cause harm to the land. We regularly hold training sessions with local villages to promote good and sustainable behaviour to growing food.

Maintaining a healthy swarm of bees in the area is very crucial. The village has trained 100 families in beekeeping and has provided beehives and technical expertise. The beekeeping project allows villagers a source of income as well as promoting a healthy population of bees which contribute towards healthy crop harvest in the area.



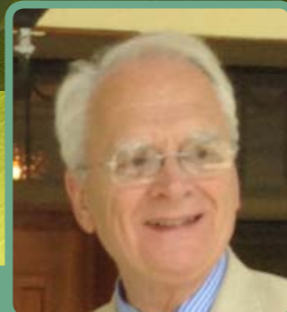
# Testimonials



“The Children’s Eco Village just outside Dar es Salaam is an innovative and ground-breaking project that will provide security and stability to the most vulnerable in our society. I had the pleasure of conducting the opening ceremony of the very first house built in the Village and was so pleased to see the smiles on the faces of the orphans that were being housed. This is an exciting venture and I applaud the Children’s Eco Village for their foresight and vision. I am confident that will be a model village for others to emulate.”

**His Excellency Hon. Al Haj Ally Hassan Mwinyi**

President of Tanzania (1985-1995)



“I was delighted and privileged to be invited by the Children’s Eco Village to visit their projects in Tanzania. I spent a week in August 2014 seeing a range of their amazing local schemes – all of which are aimed at benefiting local communities irrespective of their faith. I was particularly impressed with the eco village programme where they have established various methods of permaculture and environmental conservation in order to train the local community to respond to major challenges such as food security. It was also very humbling to hear about the work they are doing to support local orphans. I met Tiba and her friends who told me how they had been helped into education and a better life by the village. It was overwhelming to see the commitment and dedication by all involved and the communities themselves to ensure that these projects make a difference to the lives of the local people. I am proud to be an advocate for this work in Tanzania.”

**The Rt. Hon. Lord Maclennan of Rogart**

British House of Lords



“The Children’s Eco Village manifests two very crucial values, the first is the care and concern shown to orphans and the second, the protection of the environment. The Children’s Eco Village has uniquely integrated the realisation of these two values into its pioneering project in Tanzania. Apart from planning to provide housing for up to one hundred and sixty orphans in a family centred atmosphere in its thirty acre site, this project will incorporate a pilot scheme involving the introduction of environmental conservation which lay down principles for the management of land and water resources respectively.

As food self sufficiency is one of the primary objectives of this project it is intended to introduce modern techniques derived from permaculture and agro forestry practices within the fold of the project. Food security is foremost in our minds and this project will operate an open door policy when it comes to sharing the lessons learnt from our endeavours with the local population and further afield. I am very delighted and honoured to be part of this project and wish it the success it so richly deserves.”

**Fazlun Khalid**

Founder/Director (IFEES)  
Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences



“I feel really honoured to have been a part of the Children’s Eco Village project. The place itself was breath-taking, a fantastic place for the children to grow up – they took great joy in teaching me about the plants and animals living throughout the Village. Part of my volunteering involved giving lessons on the environment to supplement the children’s education, but I think they taught me at least as much as I taught them!

Seeing concepts that I had learned about in theory like permaculture being worked out in practice was truly inspiring, and has pushed me to do what I can to continue working in this field to try build a sustainable future.”

**Sami Bryant**

Volunteer





[www.childresecovillage.com](http://www.childresecovillage.com)