



ASSETS

The Arabuko-Sokoke Schools and Ecotourism Scheme



A win for children.
A win for threatened habitats.
A win for your CSR strategy.



If it were not for ASSETS, I could be at home having dropped out of school.

I would like to mentor other students and help my community conserve Arabuko-Sokoke Forest.

CYNTHIA DAMA, ASSETS STUDENT, MEKATILILI MEMORIAL SCHOOL

2027 PARTNERSHIP ASK

ASSETS combines secondary-school bursaries with environmental education and family participation in the conservation of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and Mida Creek.

A Rocha Kenya is seeking corporate partners to close the **KES 10,760,000** gap and sustain the full programme: education, follow-up, environmental learning and family participation, for 208 students in 2027.

KES 19,760,000

Annual Programme Budget

KES 9,000,000

Projected funding

KES 10,760,000

Projected gap

208

Students currently supported

KES 95,000

Annual programme package equivalent to one student

3 years

Preferred commitment
Three-year school cycle

Funding projections are subject to confirmation. The annual package pools education, conservation and programme delivery costs.

Arabuko-Sokoke Forest

Watamu Marine Reserve





Established in 2001, ASSETS is a programme of A Rocha Kenya (founded in 1999), supporting eligible students from communities around **Arabuko-Sokoke Forest** and **Mida Creek**. It combines need-based senior school bursaries with student follow-up, environmental education and family participation in conservation activities.

ASSETS addresses two linked challenges:

- 1 Financial barriers to continued education for students living adjacent to the forest and Mida Creek
- 2 Pressure on the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and adjacent Mida Creek ecosystems

1,030 students have been supported through ASSETS between the first intake in 2002 and 2026

A TRIPLE WIN

A win for children

A funded, monitored, three-year pathway through senior school for a student who would very likely otherwise have dropped out.

A win for the forest

The programme builds pro-conservation attitudes, forest-related learning and a sense of responsibility among beneficiary families¹.

92.3% of 222 surveyed graduates reported planting trees through ASSETS.

A win for corporates

Verifiable, reportable CSR impact on education and conservation attitudes and practice from a 25-year track record, not a one-off donation into a general fund.

Reporting is aggregate or anonymised by default; anything that identifies a specific student is shared only with documented parental/guardian consent.

1. Sinclair, Collins & Spaling, 2011; Jackson & Naughton-Treves, 2012

2. 2025–26 outcome survey of 222 graduates



WHY ASSETS EXISTS

Arabuko-Sokoke Forest is the largest remaining fragment of the dry coastal forest that once stretched along much of the East African coastline, covering roughly 420 km² between Malindi and Kilifi. It sits on UNESCO's World Heritage tentative list, and Nature Kenya describes it as the last large protected fragment of East African coastal forest.

BirdLife International has ranked it the second most important forest in mainland Africa for bird conservation, with over 230 recorded bird species - six of which are globally threatened - and dozens of mammal, reptile and invertebrate species found almost nowhere else on Earth. The forest and Mida Creek together form part of the **Malindi-Watamu-Arabuko Sokoke UNESCO Biosphere Reserve**, designated in 1979.





Mida Creek is a recognised **Important Bird Area**, its mangroves, tidal flats and shallow waters are a critical nursery for fish, crabs and marine life, and an internationally important stopover for thousands of migratory shore- birds.



Three globally threatened mammals live in Arabuko-Sokoke forest, including the Golden-rumped Sengi, of which roughly 90% of the entire world population is found here.



Six globally threatened bird species depend on the forest, among them the Sokoke Scops Owl and Clarke's Weaver, both found almost nowhere else.

This richness sits alongside real economic pressure. Families around the forest & creek are meeting school, food and income needs while living beside ecosystems that support their livelihoods and carry global conservation value.

Timber, charcoal, bushmeat and fish are all readily available, and, for a family unable to pay secondary school fees, often the only quick way to raise cash. **Conservation groups working in the area consistently point to the same root cause: poverty and limited livelihood options, not malice, drive most illegal exploitation.**

ASSETS was created to respond to that reality, not by policing the forest more heavily, but by **reducing the financial pressure that pushes families toward illegal exploitation, while building the environmental knowledge and participation that long-term stewardship needs.**



WHAT ASSETS SETS OUT TO ACHIEVE

ASSETS is based on the premise that reducing education-related financial pressure, alongside environmental education, student follow-up and family engagement, can contribute to expanded educational opportunity and reduced pressure on nearby ecosystems.

We do not treat continued education as a reward for conservation compliance, nor do we claim that a bursary alone can remove pressure from the forest or creek. **Education, knowledge, participation and viable livelihoods all matter together in a forest-adjacent community.**

Our objectives:

- ☐ Keep children in senior school who would otherwise drop out for lack of fees, particularly in communities where earning a place does not guarantee being able to take it up.
- ☐ Contribute to reducing pressure on Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and Mida Creek through environmental education, family participation and organised conservation activities.
- ☐ Build a generation of conservation-literate young people - many ASSETS alumni return as teachers, community leaders and conservation ambassadors in the same villages.
- ☐ Direct some of the benefits of eco-tourism and conservation activity to families who take part in the scheme. Support is targeted by need rather than distributed evenly across the community, so that those families have a direct stake in tourism, and therefore conservation, succeeding.
- ☐ Build alternative, forest-friendly livelihoods (beekeeping, woodlots, sustainable agriculture) so families are not simply asked to stop exploiting the forest with nothing to replace that income.



HOW ASSETS WORKS

Eligibility and process

- Any child living within roughly 3km of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest or Mida Creek who has been accepted into senior school may apply.
- Applications are assessed against current programme criteria and demonstrated need: academic record, family circumstances and household hardship, so that funds are targeted at those in greatest need rather than simply distributed.
- Successful applicants are supported through the full three years of Senior School (Grades 10–12) under Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum, with academic progress, attendance and welfare followed by the ASSETS team.

Environmental education and family participation

- Students receive environmental education and join practical activities such as tree planting, wildlife-club learning and community conservation awareness.
- Beneficiaries and their parents join Muvira wa ASSETS ("Thank You ASSETS" in the local Giriama language), a community conservation association across the supported schools, who take part in tree nurseries, planting, snare walks and livelihood learning when resources allow.
- Holiday camps and structured mentorship sessions add guidance on personal development, education and conservation themes beyond the classroom.

Shared responsibility

No ASSETS student receives a 100% scholarship - families contribute a modest termly amount towards the bursary fund, deliberately, so that support strengthens rather than replaces parental responsibility for their child's education.

A self-reinforcing funding source

Bursaries are funded by a mix of grants, individual donations and locally generated income, including revenue linked to the **Mida Creek Boardwalk** and funds raised through the **annual Sokoke Forest MTB Challenge**, which means part of the programme's income depends directly on the forest and creek staying healthy and attractive to visitors.

This is the mechanism that makes ASSETS more than a bursary fund with a conservation slogan attached: education, family participation, forest health and future funding are all structurally linked to one another.



EVIDENCE AND RESULTS

Programme records, independent research and a recent outcome survey help us understand what ASSETS is achieving.

55%

Reported attending university or another tertiary institution
122 of 222 surveyed graduates

90.5%

Reported receiving environmental education
201 of 222 surveyed graduates

92.3%

Reported planting trees through ASSETS **205 of 222 surveyed graduates**

2025-26 Outcome Survey

222 former beneficiaries surveyed from 743 graduates spanning 2005-2024. These are self-reported findings from respondents, rather than results for every beneficiary.



Two peer-reviewed studies also document forest-related learning and pro-conservation attitudes among participating families. These findings support the fact that the model works.

WHAT YOUR SUPPORT FUNDS

KES 95,000

An annual programme package equivalent to supporting one student, within the pooled ASSETS fund.

Education and learning

Need-based school bursaries, learning support and holiday mentorship activities.

Conservation participation

Environmental education and practical activities with students and their families.

Delivery and follow-up

School visits, academic and welfare follow-up, administration, safeguarding and reporting.

Choose your contribution

One annual package	KES 95,000
Five annual packages	KES 475,000
Ten annual packages	KES 950,000

Three-year support is encouraged. KES 285,000 is an indicative three-year equivalent; annual costs are confirmed each year. Contributions of any amount are welcome.

Funding is pooled and allocated according to need. An annual package includes education and conservation delivery; it is not a payment for every expense of a named student.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

A clear partnership agreement

We agree the contribution, partnership period, reporting schedule and recognition arrangements before delivery.

Programme and financial reporting

You receive an annual narrative and financial report covering delivery, participation, relevant results and how your contribution was applied.

Student follow-up

The ASSETS team follows academic progress, attendance and welfare through school visits and regular contact.

Responsible engagement

We share aggregate or anonymised information by default. Individual stories and photographs require documented consent and must serve the student's best interests. Visits and employee activities are organised and supervised by A Rocha Kenya.



Safeguarding and due-diligence documents are available on request.

LET'S DISCUSS YOUR SUPPORT

Help students continue their education while supporting conservation learning and participation around Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and Mida Creek.



Start a conversation

Contact us to discuss a contribution, a multi-year partnership or an activity that fits your company's priorities.

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An optional route to get involved

The Sokoke Forest MTB Challenge offers opportunities for event sponsorship and staff cycling teams, alongside direct support for ASSETS.

Supporting evidence

Sinclair, Collins & Spaling (2011), *Conservation and Society* 9(1), 42–53.

Jackson & Naughton-Treves (2012), *Environmental Conservation* 39(4), 347–356.

ASSETS programme records and 2025–26 graduate and parent outcome survey.