

LUFASI Strategic Plan 2017 – 2019

Lekki Urban Forestry and
Animal Shelter Initiative (LUFASI)



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FOREWORD

After having worked and lived in Kenya for 3 years, over 30 years ago, I had become quite inspired by the Kenyan's sustainable management of their environment to provide multiple job opportunities with a good income stream through agriculture and ecotourism. I was thus led to delve into farming on my return to Nigeria, where I acquired land on the Lekki peninsula for this purpose.

I observed first hand, during the process of establishing my agroforestry palm plantation, the extremely rapid and brutal transformation of a large portion of the Lekki axis. Over the past 25 years, the pristine mangrove swamp forest with small, scattered and mildly benign settlements was transformed into a cluttered and overcrowded urban sprawl with very little consideration for the crucial role of the coastal wetland in the ecosystem. This compelled me to follow the Nigerian Conservation Foundation example to preserve a small portion of this unique habitat, which contained some rare species of Flora and fauna.

With the cooperation of the Lagos State Government, we were able to gazette a 20 acres portion of the farm as a reserve with 99-year lease tenure on the Certificate of Occupancy.

During this period one had become quite appalled by the increasingly negative effects humanities footprints were having on the very life support ecosystems of the planet which were manifesting themselves mainly through massive species loss and global warming induced climate change. A situation that would eventually become irreversible and with totally catastrophic consequences. The fact that this has been brought about through gross ignorance and a hard-hearted lack of caring for nature has resulted in one deciding to dedicate one's life to try to reverse this trend. The dedication of the Lekki Urban Forest Animal Sanctuary Initiative (LUFASI) to providing multiple platforms and tools for addressing this horrifying situation that threatens the very future of our progeny is our humble contribution towards a solution. We make this with the fervent hope that it can inspire others to follow suit.

Mr. Desmond Majekodunmi
LUFASI Chairman

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 3-year strategic plan plots a direction for LUFASI Nature Park to help set priorities and inform subsequent resource allocation. This direction will see it transform into an urban hub in Lagos, Nigeria where people connect and interact with nature. As a newly established NGO on the Lekki peninsula, LUFASI attempts to address the issue of limited green spaces within urban areas to serve recreational and educational purposes through activities that aim to *conserve its forest, educate the public, and collaborate with stakeholders*.

The strategy to achieve this is underpinned by four focal programme areas, which was developed through a consultation process with the LUFASI management team. They include *Forest Conservation* to bridge knowledge gap and expand urban forests; *Environmental Education* to promote awareness and trigger behavioural change; *Animal Sanctuary* to cater and house distressed wildlife for educational and recreational purposes; and *Brand Development* to aid fundraising activities.

This document also does a quick horizon scan to touch some risks and assumptions like the legal status of LUFASI, community agitation, funding for programmes, and staff availability that will own and implement the activities. However, this strategic plan is incomplete and incapable of achieving the embedded vision and mission in isolation as it requires a detailed operational plan to become active and functional.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

LUFASI Nature Park transitioned from Majek Farm whose focus then was on agro-forestry for oil-palm and plantain production. However, the farm was surrounded by a viable urban forest, which attracted bird-watching activities and other nature enthusiasts who enjoyed the nature trail and serene environment. This highlighted the potential of the forest as a hub to drive the climate change message via environmental education while also offering an opportunity for relaxation within a green space in an urban area. LUFASI Nature Park was created to serve this purpose and as with other start-up organisations, a corporate plan (constitute a *strategic plan*, *operational plan*, and *office procedures*) is imperative to realise its goals and inform its stakeholders of their purpose. This strategic plan therefore is the first step in creating a corporate plan for LUFASI Nature Park.

The document is a robust 3-year (2017 to 2019) framework that highlights LUFASI's role, trajectory and encapsulates the team's strength and available opportunities. It will help LUFASI accomplish priority goals with available resources by giving a clear sense of purpose and direction of travel. It will inform its stakeholders about the role of LUFASI within the community while setting targets with corresponding action plans to accomplish the goals. The strategic framework will help LUFASI track activities, strengthen brand and utilise same to generate the required funds to execute activities.

The process of developing this strategic plan considered both internal and external contexts including a consultative session with the LUFASI management team. It outlines a vision and mission for LUFASI, and cascades them through four focal areas into goals, objectives, and measurable milestones. These focal areas (forest conservation, environmental education, animal rescue and sanctuary, brand development and fundraising) are the pillars of LUFASI's activities. The document also identifies the risks and assumptions that may be associated with the process of achieving objectives with possible actions to address the situation. This plan rounds up with recommendations on priority activities that should accompany the plan as the organisation transits from planning into implementation.

The strategic plan is designed as a dynamic document such that LUFASI's objectives and corresponding activities may be modified if need be to accommodate prevailing realities as may evolve and influence circumstances. However, the identity of LUFASI including the strategic goals is likely to be unaltered once confirmed.

2.0 VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

What is LUFASI?

LUFASI is an acronym for Lekki Urban Forestry and Animal Shelter Initiative: a non-governmental organisation established in 2015 and dedicated to the preservation of natural habitats in urban areas for use as a field laboratory to interact with and learn from nature. LUFASI attempts to address the issue of limited green spaces in urban areas like Lagos state, which can provide recreation and aesthetic satisfaction, and likewise enlighten the populace to clear the ambiguity of climate change through practical learning. The shelter for rescued animals (wild and domestic) serves to educate on conservation with an extra aesthetic and recreational incentive for the centre.

What is its aim?

Vision: An urban area where people connect and interact with nature.

Mission: To serve as an urban hub for learning, recreation and awareness on the natural environment in Nigeria.

How does it plan to do this?

The vision and mission will be realised through the following:

- **Conserve** native urban biodiversity for posterity, its appeal and educational purpose.
- **Educate** on the significance of climate change, the natural environment and our collective roles in reducing our footprint on nature.
- **Collaborate** with the wider community of partners and stakeholders to enhance the implementation of activities and drive sustainability.

3.0 PROGRAMME AREAS

Four focal areas were identified as platforms to focus on and drive the organisation's mission following an analysis of LUFASI. The analysis considered the current activities of LUFASI, the assets (human, social, physical and ecological), and opportunities that can be leveraged upon to drive the organisation's mission. Emphasis was on the issues LUFASI tries to address while the weaknesses and assumptions were also weighed before concluding on the four strategic areas that will constitute the thematic programmes for LUFASI. Although these thematic programmes may be individual pillars, they are interdependent on each other and they will experience an overlap of activities and functions transversely.

Nonetheless, the programme areas will drive the activities of LUFASI with each having its own specific goals and corresponding objectives with deliverables and indicators. In addition, the areas have linkages with the Nigerian National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP), Aichi Targets, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and other relevant conservation priorities at national, regional and global levels. The four focal programme areas include:

1. Forest Conservation
2. Environmental Education
3. Animal Rescue and Sanctuary
4. Brand Development and Fundraising

3.1 Forest Conservation

There is now a growing commitment to preserve, restore and extend natural habitats in urban areas, which makes LUFASI an ideal location to learn, connect and interact with nature. Located within one of the largest metropolitan areas in Africa, the 20 acres urban forest is a huge natural capital with tangible values and opportunities for supporting functions of the fragile ecosystem of Lekki peninsula and likewise central to driving LUFASI's mission. Some of these benefits include serving as a shield for the wind, control of erosion, regulation of humidity and absorption of precipitation, which all vitally maintain the ecological stability of the area. The forest also houses globally threatened species like the large Ekki Trees *Lophira alata* and Hooded Vultures *Necrosyrtes monachus*, which have a conservation status of vulnerable (VU) and critically endangered (CE) respectively. Serving as a field site for agro-forestry will further corroborate the forest's tangibility for sustainable socio-economic benefits while the nursery is a good pedestal for urban forest regeneration and expansion.

3.2 Environmental Education

Conservation is virtually ineffective without education, which improves the capacity of people to address environmental issues and engender a behavioural change in the right direction. Environmental education is an important social tool for biodiversity conservation to improve the understanding of how humans interact with nature thus nurturing a sense of

responsibility. There is already an active educational unit at LUFASI with several on-going activities and tools for promoting awareness and building relevant capacity on climate change and conservation. Without prejudice to these activities, this document buttresses and streamlines them with the organisation's direction and focus.

3.3 Animal Rescue and Sanctuary

Wildlife still suffers persecution in Nigeria particularly in areas where human activities overlap with their range. In a densely populated city like Lagos, the expanding infrastructural developments are displacing native wildlife from their natural habitats while some are hunted for their meat and financial gains despite the country being signatory to international treaties that aim to conserve wildlife. This has made wildlife alien species in urban areas and the only animal contact with the public is the domesticated ones. LUFASI attempts to salvage this situation by providing a home for these distressed animals to support the efforts of wildlife conservation. In addition, it brings the wildlife closer to the urban populace as they add to the appeal of the park via their recreational and educational values. The role LUFASI plays is different from that of a zoological garden because it does not exhibit the animals permanently in a locked enclosure. Some of the animals roam around the park while others are released back into the wild following their rescue and rehabilitation.

3.4 Brand Development and Fundraising

Brand development and fundraising are intrinsically linked together and both have a strong correlation with the success of any organisation. A good brand delivers the organisation's identity and credibility in the minds of the public or specific stakeholders (tourists, students, donors, partners, beneficiaries) while serving as a subject to facilitate funds to implement activities and meet goals. Using the values from all other strategic goals, a business proposition that distinguishes LUFASI can be moulded to take on the perceptions and needs of the public (role of market research). This will successively provide the fulcrum for fundraising efforts, which will then exchange this created value with the required economic advantage to implement activities. Concisely, the LUFASI brand is the most important fundraising asset at its disposal.

4.0 STRATEGY

4.1 Strategic Goal 1

To conserve LUFASI's forest by bridging the knowledge gap and safeguarding the biodiversity, while exploring possibilities for expanding forest cover across Lagos State.

4.1.1 Strategic objectives

Objective 1: By 2019, generate data on at least 5 different biodiversity taxa within LUFASI's forest.

Objective 2: By 2019, delineate the LUFASI's forest boundary with a protection and monitoring scheme to reduce poaching and encroachment by 80%.

Objective 3: By 2019, develop a nursery and seed bank for LUFASI to facilitate regeneration and growing of at least 3,000 native trees in 3 urban areas in Lagos State.

Objective 4: By 2019, provide a minimum of 12 practical learning sessions on sustainable and efficient agro-forestry techniques, which combines forest conservation.

4.1.2 Deliverables

1. 5 biodiversity taxa identified and surveyed within LUFASI forest with the conservation status of their respective species confirmed
2. Delineated boundary of LUFASI with a developed reference imagery
3. LUFASI's forest protected and monitored regularly
4. Developed nursery with seed bank of tree species native to the Lekki peninsula
5. 3,000 native tree seedlings planted across 3 urban centres within Lagos
6. Farming site(s) created within LUFASI to learn about organic and sustainable agro-forestry

4.1.3 Verifiable indicators

1. Technical reports and publications from biodiversity surveys
2. Checklist of species with their conservation status
3. Reference map of LUFASI's forest
4. An active protection and monitoring unit
5. A functioning nursery and seed bank
6. Tree saplings around urban areas in Lagos
7. Farm produce from agro-forestry activities

4.2 Strategic Goal 2

To promote awareness among the public and develop relevant capacity on biodiversity conservation and climate change issues needed to trigger a behavioural change.

4.2.1 Strategic objectives

Objective 1: By 2019, create awareness on climate change and biodiversity conservation to up to 6,000 tourists and visitors including students from primary to tertiary levels.

Objective 2: By 2019, produce up to 6 educational materials and guidelines on conservation and climate change practices for dissemination to at least 3,000 students across 300 schools in Nigeria.

Objective 3: Commemorate at least 5 relevant internationally recognised environmental dates annually to foster public sensitization.

4.2.2 Deliverables

1. 6,000 visitors and tourists (including students) educated on biodiversity conservation and climate change
2. LUFASI forest as a participating field laboratory and engaged students on climate change
3. Designed and published 6 materials that are relevant to climate change and biodiversity conservation in Nigeria
4. 3,000 students from 300 schools in Nigeria emerged as stewards to adopt and commit to best practices in biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation
5. Organized activities to commemorate annual global environmental dates within LUFASI

4.2.3 Verifiable indicators

1. Report, log-book and picture document of school visits and student activities in the forest
2. Workshop materials and reports of sessions with schools and students
3. Developed and published materials on climate change and biodiversity conservation
4. Monitoring and feedback report of student's positive actions and behavioural changes within their homes and immediate communities
5. Activity report and multimedia documentation of commemorated global environmental dates

4.3 Strategic Goal 3

To serve as sanctuary for injured and abandoned wildlife including domesticated ones for increasing the educational, recreational and aesthetic value of LUFASI.

4.3.1 Strategic objectives

Objective 1: By 2019, provide at least 10 quality shelters for rescued animals and improve the quality of care given to them.

Objective 2: Design quarterly schedule of activity by 2019 to help the public learn more about the animals and their connection to nature.

4.3.2 Deliverables

1. 10 standardized shelters created for all animal units in LUFASI
2. Animals are well tended with accurate medical records maintained
3. Collated natural history of rescued animals to educate visitors
4. Embarked on public awareness on importance of wild animal rescue to at least 7 animal prone urban areas such as the Badore Cooperate Villas
5. Lend a voice to CITES's campaign against wildlife poaching
6. Recognise individuals and/or groups that rescue wild animals

4.3.3 Verifiable indicators

1. 10 active and standardized shelters
2. Animal's good health and condition
3. Natural history and brief of animals
4. Report of campaigns and multimedia documentation
5. Newsletters articles, findings from standardized research, pro-active press releases, social media presence (Linkedin, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
6. LUFASI Newsletter and Annual Report feature of recognised individuals and groups

4.4 Strategic Goal 4

To develop a brand image for LUFASI that resonates with the public and serves as a tool for fundraising activities.

4.4.1 Strategic objectives

Objective 1: Design a brand unique to LUFASI with a business proposition by the end of 1st quarter of 2017.

Objective 2: By 2019, attract and retain at least 5 multilateral partners and build a loyal donor base with an unrestricted ₦40m for LUFASI.

Objective 3: By 2019, identify and set-up different membership categories for LUFASI and drive same to attain up to 1,000 members with at least ₦2,500 as lowest subscription fee.

Objective 4: By 2019, develop at least 2 communications and media medium for LUFASI.

4.4.2 Deliverables

1. Collated and analysed needs and preferences of the targeted public
2. Produced a simple and adaptable logo
3. 5 multilateral partnerships developed and retained for LUFASI
4. Unrestricted ₦40m generated from partnerships and fundraising activities
5. Membership database with categories created
6. 1,000 registered members with ₦2,500,000 generated
7. Facilitated 2 fundraising events and activities (LUFASI Day and Annual Dinner) annually to raise funds
8. Produced the LUFASI quarterly, newsletter and annual report

4.4.3 Verifiable indicators

1. Report and findings of market research (stakeholder's needs assessment)
2. Logo prints on souvenirs, letterheads, etc.
3. Donor database, letters of appreciation, minutes of partner meetings
4. Membership software/application database D
5. Different membership categories for subscription
6. LUFASI's financial balance sheet
7. Reports and multimedia coverage of LUFASI Day and Annual Dinner
8. LUFASI newsletter and annual report

5.0 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The legal status of LUFASI Nature Park is important because it underpins every possible goal, activity or action to be implemented. This involves the delineation and official gazetting of the park with all necessary legal documents. Besides, because LUFASI is located within the Lekki peninsula, an area that holds significant real estate and developmental value, it is not unlikely that there would be community agitation. Thus, recognising the communities as major stakeholders and facilitating active consultation with their representatives on relevant issues is important to douse any issue that may arise. The communities may also be beneficiaries of some of LUFASI's activities like agro-forestry while playing a major role in reducing encroachment into the urban forest.

Another major challenge LUFASI could encounter while attempting to achieve its vision and mission is the issue of funding. Financial resources are important to facilitate activities and they are not only limited but also funding sources have contracted in recent years. Sourcing funds for conservation has therefore become difficult due to competition, lack of tangible and immediate benefits, and perhaps because conservation entities have not attempted to speak the language of donors and custodians of funds. This brings to the fore concepts like natural capital and ecosystem services, which attempts to put a tangible value on biodiversity to attract the needed funds to implement activities. LUFASI has 20 acres of natural capital (urban forest) on the Lekki peninsula with a value roughly estimated at over ₦3billion! With a solid brand that also considers the additional monetary value of the ecosystem services offered by the forests, it is not impossible to secure a stream of unrestricted funding to drive the organisation's mission.

Visions require goals and actions to realise, while competent personnel are instrumental in implementing actions. LUFASI could struggle to achieve its goals if the required human resources are not available to own roles and implement relevant programme activities. A soft panacea to bridging this gap may be to source immediate funds (often restricted and little) to keep these positions temporarily active pending the confirmation of unrestricted funds that can make the positions permanent. Another option is to bring in graduates (including Corp members and fresh school leavers) temporarily as interns to deliver on a set of targets for the particular programme. However, there should be defined roles and responsibilities for them with milestones of what they are expected to deliver on within a specific time. Nonetheless, the personnel (either temporal or permanent) will require relevant training to nurture skills and develop their capacity to deliver effectively on the job. There are so many fully-funded conservation related trainings that LUFASI can take advantage of in this regard.

The above risks and assumptions are not exhaustive but the ones highlighted here are the important ones based on prior correspondence with the LUFASI team. Planning is always guided by assumptions and when these are clearly identified and mitigated against, the course of realising organisational goals will be more predictable and beneficial.

6.0 PRIORITY STEPS FOR LUFASI

6.1 An Operational Plan

If a strategic plan informs the activities of an organisation then an operational plan shows how those activities will be achieved. This is a coherent guide to daily activities with a clear understanding of what needs to be done by each staff member to achieve the organisational goal. An operation plan includes an organogram, defined team roles, job deliverables and timeline of activities for each staff as they contribute to the achievement of the vision and mission. A financial structure and budget with human resource and administrative functions are also part of this plan.

As a recently established organisation, this is also quite crucial to LUFASI's success and sustainability. An operational plan will add flesh to the structure outlined in the strategic plan and allow streamlining of activities across the programmes. For example, an organogram will give the flow of responsibilities between and across programmes for every position while each staff will have identified team roles, work-plan and timelines. Furthermore, the plan can help prioritise and allocate limited budget and resources to actions that will benefit LUFASI the most. A good example is the public awareness, which can help bring more ecotourism benefits to LUFASI Nature Park. All these roles and functions will be subjected to regular evaluation to improve the implementation process, stabilize the organisation as a whole and help retain its perdurability even after any staff leave their position. Without an operational plan, a strategic plan is ineffective.

6.2 Brand Development and Fundraising Plan

The development of an implementation plan for branding and fundraising is another top priority because conservation is purely a social process with economic requirements. To expect a behavioural change that will bring about an impact requires a strong brand that will deliver a loyal group of stakeholders to LUFASI. These include donors, partners, government, target groups, etc.). In addition, a prerequisite for successful funding is the alignment of an organisation's activities with relevant protocols, policies and targets at all levels (national, regional and global). Thus, working with partners and collaborators while the programme activities contribute to the achievement of conservation targets is key to LUFASI's success, sustainability and the fundraising strategy. This whole process informs image building, marketing, membership development, communications and media relations.

With this plan in place, certain restricted funds that are readily available from grants and donors can be secured. This will temporarily keep specific positions active pending the attraction of more consistent and unrestricted income to cushion the permanence of such positions. Unrestricted income may be in form of subventions from partners or committed donations that are crucial in keeping an organisation like LUFASI active. However, this brand development and fundraising plan do not preclude other programmes from having a strategy plan but securing income and fostering the LUFASI brand is crucial.