

WHV – Lamu old Town

Lamu Old Town, Kenya

Cultural property inscribed on the World Heritage List (2001)

PROJECT DATES

17 April – 28 April 2025

THE SITE Lamu Old Town is the oldest and best-preserved Swahili settlement in East Africa, retaining its traditional functions. Built in coral stone and mangrove timber, the town is characterized by the simplicity of structural forms enriched by such features as inner courtyards, verandas, and elaborately carved wooden doors.

OBJECTIVES - The project aims at preserving the architectural and cultural heritage of Lamu Old Town by restoring traditional Swahili buildings and promoting awareness of its historical significance. It also seeks to strengthen community involvement, enhance sustainable tourism practices, and build local and international capacity for long-term heritage conservation.

ACTIVITIES – The Volunteers will conduct community workshops, educational sessions in schools, and organize public exhibitions of Swahili crafts, along with a social media campaign to promote Lamu's heritage globally. Restoration work will involve repairing Swahili houses using traditional coral stone and mangrove wood techniques, supported by conservation workshops. Additionally, beach clean-ups and mangrove reforestation will help protect the local ecosystem, while vibrant public murals will be created to raise awareness and celebrate Lamu's cultural identity. These activities engage local artisans, students, and residents, fostering both cultural pride and environmental stewardship.

PARTNERS – UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa; National Museums of Kenya; Kenya Wildlife Service; Lamu Youth Affairs.

Girls to Women Foundation

Mr. Azani Ngumbao Thoya

mwanyaleazan@gmail.com

