

THIRD SECTOR AWARD

Small Charity, Big Achiever

Criteria

For a small organisation that has made a big impact with an innovative project or projects. Organisations with annual incomes of up to £1m are eligible

Judging panel

The staff of *Third Sector* magazine

Finalists

- Action for Advocacy, Promoting Excellence in Advocacy Provision
- Campaign for National Parks, Mosaic Partnership
- Foundation for the Relief of Disabled Orphans
- Prisoners' Advice Service



Excellent Development

★ The Ukambani region of Kenya is an unforgiving place to live. The soil is poor and the area is prone to drought and food shortages. Farmers face walks of up to 10km to collect water, which is often unsafe to drink. The citizens of Ukambani are not alone in their lack of access to clean water – it's a problem shared by half of Kenya's 16 million people.

This hardship is the backdrop to the work of Excellent Development, a charity formed in 2002 with the goal of improving food production and access to water in Kenya.

Its work is focused on building sand dams to collect rainwater and planting trees that provide food, timber and fuel, and aid soil and water conservation. Excellent Development works closely with local people through community self-help groups that identify what help is needed, take ownership of the work and use the charity for its expertise and advice.

Despite its relative youth and the small size of its team – Excellent Development employs only seven

UK staff and 50 local field staff in Kenya – it has delivered impressive results.

Since its formation, the charity has helped communities build 202 small-scale sand dams and planted more than 580,000 trees. This work, the charity estimates, has directly benefited 16,285 people, with another 200,000 likely to benefit indirectly because of increased food production, job creation and reduced demand for existing water sources.

The charity has also been expanding its reach, thanks to big year-on-year improvements in its fundraising income. It began life with a tiny annual income of £9,972, but this had risen to £370,000 by 2006/07 and £830,000 by 2008/09.

The *Third Sector* team was impressed by how far Excellent Development had come in its short life. It has helped local communities deliver a better future for thousands of people, and is now planning to expand into other parts of Africa.



Thirsty work The charity helps communities in Kenya improve their access to clean water; Benjamin Araud, trust and public fundraiser, receives the award from Shappi Khorsandi (left) and Third Sector associate publisher Beth Pedersen

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Awarded by

ThirdSector