A day in Dunga

Reflections and ideas from test tours
Introduction

This document is a follow up from the previous two reports from April and October 2013; Dunga identity and image - a pre-study and Dunga ecotourism development - emerging ideas and possible continuation. The first report focused on the identity and image of Dunga and was meant to function as a starting point and inspiration for further discussion and development of Dunga as an ecotourism site. It showed that Dunga has great potential, due to the closeness of the lake, the local history and culture as well as the sense of community. It also pointed out areas that are in need of improvements, and gave some ideas for development. The second report assembled all ideas that had come up until May 2013 in several workshops and discussions with the community in Dunga, as well as it contained a continuation of thoughts about how these ideas could be further developed.

This third report focuses on the prototyping and implementation of ideas that was conducted in November-December 2013, mainly through two test tours. The analysis shows that there is a great potential in the packages that were prototyped, as well as it gives ideas for further improvements.

We encourage the community of Dunga to feel free to use this report and its contents in tourism development, as well as to come back to us with comments, changes and reflections on its content. The photos are taken by Eva Maria Jernsand or Helena Kraff (unless stated) and will be shared upon request. We would also like to thank the community of Dunga, Dectta, Ecofinder Kenya and the BMU for your collaboration in the process so far. Also on behalf of all participants that visited Dunga during the test tours they would like to say thank you for the experience.

Gothenburg, February 2014

Eva Maria Jernsand and Helena Kraff, PhD students at Gothenburg University and members of Kisumu Local Interaction Platform (KLIP)

Contact information:
eva.maria.jernsand@handels.gu.se                        helena.kraff@hdk.gu.se
Prototyping of the test tours

It was originally professor Lena Mossberg that proposed the idea of conducting a test tour, and that it could be a way to test some of the ideas in Dunga. Professor Mossberg arranged with a group of eight people from Sweden that would visit Dunga. In connection to this the group would also visit Masai Mara and Lamu, and later in this report we will discuss how Dunga and Kisumu can think about how to connect to other destinations in Kenya. The group of tourists from Sweden represents an international target group, however since domestic tourists are also a very important group for Dunga connections were made with two families currently living in Kisumu, and the first tour was conducted with these families.

The test tours gave an opportunity to prototype some of the ideas that had come up. For a period of about two weeks before the test tours focus was put on three areas; infrastructure, package development and how to integrate local craft in ecotourism packages. As a base for this prototyping phase the “Dunga theme” was used (further described in the report Dunga ecotourism development - emerging ideas and possible continuation). The prototyping phase will be discussed briefly in this section, but you will also find a further discussion on it under the heading named Implications for development.

Infrastructural development

In regards to infrastructure some problematic areas that was in need of development was chosen; signage systems, waste collection as well as general safety issues.

During a workshop ideas for signage were sketched on that could give guidance to both tourists and the community in Dunga. It was discussed that three signposts of a directional kind were needed indicating areas such as toilets, BMU office, shops, and boat ride, and that they were to be painted in the Dunga colours of green, yellow and blue. The blue colour came up as a suggestion during a workshop as a complement to the previously discussed green and yellow, and was seen as it important since it symbolises the lake. It was also suggested to use symbols together with or instead of text, and to use the Luo language more frequently in order to strengthen the theme as a Luo fishing village. These parts could be integrated in a graphic profile in the future.

In the same workshop ideas for a recycling point were discussed and sketched on. For inspiration we had an example from the Kenyan company Ocean Sole that makes jewellery and interior decorations out of recycled flip flops. In their company theme they focus a lot on recycling, playfulness and creativity, which have resulted in a playful colour scheme. On the company compound they have set up a large recycling point that is clearly in line with the company theme and that aims to encourage eco friendliness.

In the workshop it was discussed that having litter bins in metal is difficult since it is a sought after material. Instead ideas were sketched on constructions with natural materials. First an idea came up to use local stone, which is a good idea however it is quite costly, and it was decided that it could be done in wood. The suggestion was that this waste collection point could be placed by the beach. Three bins were planned to be placed inside the construction so that it is possible to separate different types of waste. Hopefully the separated waste (for example plastic bottles in one bin) can be used for local craft production.
Another group in the workshop performed a walking tour to discuss points of interest for safety, sanitation, guidance and reception. It was discussed what happens at each point or situation, what might go wrong, who should be in charge, and what would be needed to improve it. As examples, ideas on shades and benches on the beach were brought forward, as well as the importance of steps from the pier to the beach to make it accessible for elderly and disabled people. The group also set out points for signposts and waste collection.

**Package development**

Another workshop focused on packaging a Dunga day tour. Ideas that had come up in previous workshops, such as using storytelling to talk about local culture was included as well as new ideas. Focus was also put on how to incorporate tourist interaction as a way to add value to the tour, for example by engaging the tourists in fishing and making ugali. The workshop started with the participants drawing the map of Dunga. Then activities were proposed, of which some had been discussed before in other workshops. When the actual point for the activity was set, as well as the people involved, it was easy to relate to other activities, places and people. For each point, small folded cardboard figures were set out and speaking bubbles filled in where for example the guide told the story of a tree or a bird. Lastly the activities were connected with red dotted lines and arrows, as the path to follow. This workshop setting is easy to use for developing new packages for different target groups, such as schoolchildren or conference guests from the hotels in Kisumu. It can also be used for specific aspects of the tour, such as food and craft activities.
Integrating craft in ecotourism services

In another workshop the focus was on how craft production can be used as a way to increase tourist interaction. For example the tourists can try to make paper out of water hyacinth, and rope of used plastic material. During this workshop an idea about labelling of local products to add value to craft that had previously come up was further developed. Several suggestions of labels were sketched, and it was discussed that the colour of the paper can be yellow (manila paper), that the shape can be rectangular, the text can be in green and there can be a fish symbol in blue. To further add value it was discussed that there could be a short text about the product that explains what it is made out of, how the use of recycled material is good for the local environment, that by buying this product the buyer helps the community, as well as it can include the signature of the craftsman/craftswoman who has made it.

Ideas was also discussed how locally made craft products can be integrated in tours, such as a Dunga guest book, picnic baskets, and papyrus mats, as well as how the craft group and local fishmonger could have some sort of Dunga uniform (for example t-shirts, overalls and aprons), designed in the Dunga theme like the tour guide t-shirts. Ideas that came up but were not used on the test tours could be included in coming tours. Examples are a boda boda ride on the way to Dunga, a wetland walk, stamps as entrance tickets, local stories performed by local actors and with visiting children participating, preparing of fish caught by the tourists, dancing lessons, playing of local instruments, tourists making their own papyrus flutes, fishing hooks, jewellery (out of seeds), and footballs (out of recycled plastics).
Testing a day in Dunga

The following section describes the two test tours in a chronological order, as they happened. It contains reflections on research observations, as well as material from the tourists’ journal notes and interviews with members of the Dunga community. After this section implications follow on how Dunga can proceed to further develop these and similar packages.

National group - families
The first tour participants were two families from Kisumu. It was a group of ten: a mother with her two children, and another family with a father and six children. The youngest and the two eldest children are girls and the others boys.

The group was scheduled to arrive at nine in the morning and about ten to nine they called to ask for directions to the beach. They soon arrived to the gate, in one car, and passed without being greeted. Instead they drove behind the pedagogical centre to park. After that they were told that they had parked in the wrong spot, whereby some time was wasted on moving the car. A routine for greeting the guests would be appropriate here, as well as signs leading to Dunga. For example it has been discussed earlier that a wooden sign in the shape of a tilapia placed somewhere close to Impala Park would be nice. If the parking was placed outside the gate, it would also make it easier to greet guests.

In the mother’s report from the day she wrote that she sees a big threat to tourism development at Dunga beach because of the poor road from town. Those using their private cars will be discouraged, and the county government must develop the road urgently to encourage ecotourism. She also sees the entrance as a concern from an environmental point of view: “The hygiene is poor and no sign to signal this important site. So it is necessary to have a gate, some fencing, sign-posts, sculptures or carvings of important animals in the area like hippopotamus, and expected important scenes or tourist attractions. Posters of the same.” Her comment shows the appropriateness of the planned new gate, as well as it brings up the important issue of the road, which has come up several times. Before the road gets tarmacked, it would be good to think of how it could be used not only for cars and buses but for pedestrians and bikes, as well as how the surroundings could be planned in order to encourage a lively community and an interesting ride or walk to Dunga.

In the pedagogical centre (and shop) one of the guides talked to the group about the products: paintings made of egg shells, postcards and key rings made of water hyacinths, and bags made of recycled polythene bags. The talk was good but the participants were not introduced to Dunga nor were they introduced to what they were to do during the day. The dad showed an interest in some of the products and asked for

Image 11-12. A sign leading to Dunga would make it easier for visitors to find their way. Greeting tourists at the gate makes the start of a tour better.
the price on a bag made of recycled plastics, saying that he had never seen this kind of recycling before. Also in his comments about the tour he wrote:

“It was wonderful to see the gorgeous end products from waste materials”

Image 13. Products of recycled material are interesting for tourists.

It is good that the environmental friendly products were shown and told about, but it might be better to do this activity at the end of the tour. The activity took a while and it became evident that the group wanted to get started when the dad said “How about you say we move?” The mother mentioned, for the first time but she repeated it all through the day that her daughter wanted to go to the playground. An option could be to add this activity for the youngest children while the elderly do other things during the day, such as craft activities.

The group moved outside to start the tour, and the guests noticed the solar lamps. One of the guides explained how it works, saying that members of the community can rent one lamp for 20 shillings a night. He also showed the earth bench made of plastic bottles and rubbish. One of the boys wrote in his comments: “a bench was made out of rubbish. I was amazed to see such a beautiful creativity”. Another boy wrote:

“this taught me the goodness of taking care of the environment”

Showing the solar lamps and the bench had not been discussed to be a part of the tour on the workshop the days before, but it seemed very interesting for the tourists and it seems appropriate to include in an introduction to Dunga, since it gives the image of an environmentally conscious place.
On the way to the beach, the guide stopped by two sausage trees to explain how they are used for traditional and medical purposes, making brews and burial ceremonies. The story of the sausage tree is interesting and a possibility is to thoroughly go through the story and how it could be told so that visitors get the full picture.

When the group was standing by the sausage tree someone offloaded hot charcoal in a pile and put a hot stove on top. One of the kids could easily have burnt him/herself on it, and this incident sheds light on the importance of safety being part of the guide’s job. The next stop was the Yellow Oleandra tree, where the story was told that if you get bitten by a snake you can use the milk that comes out from the bark when you knock on it, which the guide showed, and the participants showed great interest in it. Down by the beach the guide mentioned that just as the coffee that in the past was imported from Uganda so is the coal today, pointing to the charcoal bags and the shipping boat that was docked by the pier. It is good to connect stories with each other. A continuation might be to connect to environmental issues that are related to the use of coal, perhaps also in relation to solar energy and the potential use of biogas or briquettes made of water hyacinths.

Another guide suggested talking about the boat building under the umbrella tree. It was a nice initiative and a good interaction between the guides. “Come closer”, the guide said and the group moved over to two fishing boats. The guides told the group how they are made out of both old and new wood, and that the middle (the “backbone” of the boat) part is really strong if you use the right material, and that this part traditionally is passed on by generations. A boat should leak a little bit to keep the wood in shape, and traditionally you name the boat after your mother or grandmother. This is a good stop for a guided tour, since fishing and boats are big parts of Dunga, and to make it even more inclusive of the community an idea is to have the local boat builders tell the story.

The next stop was the fish banda. The guides took turns in telling the participants about the fish and how it is handled. The table was a bit unclean and there was no fish around, since it was a too late in the day. The guide talked about how the Nile perch can reach 300 kilos, that they eat this fish in Germany, and that the spillovers from the factory goes to Korea and Japan. Outside the banda the Muringa tree was shown. On the workshop the other day it had been discussed that this was a tree you could make good drumsticks of, but this story was not told. The guide took one of the elongated fruits and said it is used for tea, as a water purifier and for medical purposes. Here and at the other stops there could be more interaction with the tourists, by asking them questions and for example sending the fruit of the Muringa tree around so that the group could touch and smell it. Also, the tour could be arranged so that the banda and the beach are shown earlier, when there are more fish around.
The group now moved down to the beach where the fishmongers were working. During the workshops we had talked about letting the fishmongers tell tourists about the fish as a way to involve them in the tourism business. The fishmongers were present but the guides were talking, showing catfish, lungfish, and ibis birds. From the children comments we find them noticing that the nile perch is the queen of the lake (while hippo is the king), tilapia is the most preferred, and lung fish can survive for three weeks without being in the water. A water hyacinth plant was also pulled out of the water by the guide and the problems with the plant explained. This is a nice way of talking about the water hyacinth, making it possible for the tourists to take a closer look at the plant.

It was now time for the boat ride, and everybody were given life jackets and helped to put them on by the guides. Some drinks (water and soda) were carried on the boat in a bag made out of recycled polythene bags. An international student group was also on the beach and some of the boys from that group started throwing stones on the birds and in the water. This indicates that it is important that tourists shows respect to the place, which is an issue that is integrated in the ecotourism concept, and that the responsibility for safety and information lies on the guide if there are no other people in charge.
It was not until the group was in the boat and out on the water that it was mentioned that they would see hippos. “Oh, once we were chased by a hippo” the mother said. The guides talked about the wetlands and its flora and fauna, and during the trip hippos were spotted. One of the boys wrote: “At first I was very scared because I thought the Hippo would eat the boat. Then we went near Hippo, we were told that it was friendly”. Unfortunately there was no storytelling or singing about the hippos, which the kids would probably have liked. The mother wrote in her comments of the tour, including the boat tour, that the guides are familiar with their environment but that more emphasis could be on knowledge about different needs and interests of different categories of tourists. She also mentioned that their approach was mainly educational, but that tourism also serves other needs.

Out on the water it was nice and cool and the boat ride went well, except that it was hard to hear the guides from the back of the boat when the engine was going. It seems as though everybody enjoyed the ride, and the mum said “that was a long ride into the water, you feel so natural”. She said she had never been out for such a long tour before: it was almost two hours, and it seems that she thought the longer the better. The father wrote in his comments of the tour:

“It was an adorable site to see the birds how they co-exist with other ecosystems available at the lake. The way some of the birds did swim was good to behold. The boat ride was an excellent experience, feeling the cold breeze and viewing the Islands of Ndere and distant Homa Bay hills. It was psychologically healing to get into the cold breeze propagated by the water weaves. It was also scary to think of what would happen if the wind became boisterous.”

One of the teenage girls wrote in her comments: “…it enabled us to capture the spectacular view of the lake and its surrounding landforms. This was quite entertaining since the ride was also enjoyable”.

Back to the shore one of the girls tripped, as she was about to get out of the boat. This is an aspect that might be solved by building some kind of structure for climbing in and out of boats.

Lunch was served in one of the local restaurants, which is elevated off the ground, giving a nice view and cool breeze. One of the guides said “I hope you have enjoyed the boat ride”, explaining that lunch will be self service and that it will be fish since this is Dunga the fishing village. He also mentioned that after lunch they would get the opportunity to make some craft products. There was fish, fried and boiled, chicken, ugali, rice, and osuga. The mother had previously mentioned that she liked her family to eat healthily and therefore preferred boiled fish and the dad had mentioned that one of the kids is allergic to fish but that chicken could be an option. The overall perceptions of the food were very good. The father wrote in his comments: “The food was sumptuous and fresh. It was good experience to be served with fresh fried tilapia fish with green vegetables, rice and ugali. This was delicious meal and served in a well ventilated place”. Also one of the teenage girls wrote: “the lunch was nice since we were offered a variety of African which I honestly enjoyed. Not forgetting the cool breeze that we received some meters above the ground, this was indeed relaxing.” During lunch the group ordered sodas. This was originally not included in the package, however it might be a good idea to do so, since most people will probably like something to drink during lunch.
After a while the craft guide came up to the restaurant and took the group to the activities by the craft station. He had placed out water hyacinth plants, ropes and water hyacinth products. He spoke with a strong voice and interacted with the group by asking them questions: “Have you seen these nice flowers?” and “Do you know what we use the water hyacinth for?” He told the story of how the water hyacinth was introduced to the lake, saying they were planted to give hide and protection to the fish, but that it went all wrong. When using the plant for crafts you take one part of the plant, he said, and took the part off to show. The group did not get the opportunity to touch it themselves, though. The guide then turned to introduce some of the locally made water hyacinth products, and the children got to try the hats. The guide mentioned that they are working on “Dunga products” where they mix the water hyacinth with polythene bags. The mother, who is an ecologist, asked what kind of chemicals are used for the ropes, showing an interest in knowing if the chemicals are environmentally friendly or not. Then the guide showed the trays and explained how they use old polythene plastics or yarn to wrap around the steel structure to prevent rust. “Feel it, it is soft” the guide said to the children and let them touch the yarn. He continued: “This is going to give the picture of Dunga which is all about fishing and the lake”. The father wrote in his comments:

“We had a great time listening to how wastes are turned into useful materials, for instance polythene papers are recycled at Dunga to make different types of products”

One of the younger boys wrote: “The first thing I learnt was you can make beautiful things out of waste products e.g. polythene bags and plastics. Polythene bags were used to make things like bags and hats.” Both the adults and the children seemed interested in the information about ways of using waste material for making products, indicating that this is an activity that could be developed further. One of the women who had also taken part of the craft production training was present, however she could be integrated more in the activities.

The guide turned to the kids and asked if they wanted to make their own products; necklaces, bangles and earrings. He had prepared pendants out of water hyacinths, and laid out beads in the colours of the Kenyan flag. There were also mussel shells from the lake. The thread was fishing line which had been
destroyed by roots and hooks and thereby unusable for fishing. The dad seemed a bit hesitant at first and said “By the time we finish it will be dark”. The guide helped them to get started: “Hold that! Try that!”. The kids seemed to really enjoy it and showed the guide what they had done. “Wow!” he said. Both children and adults were totally immersed in the activities for almost two hours. The dad said:

“This is the most enjoyable, because it is an activity, in the other ones they were not involved”

He said that kids always concentrate better when they get to actively do it. In his notes from the day he wrote:

“The boys were excited to be involved in such activity. It reminded me of the fact that when I do, I do not forget. This together with the souvenirs we made gives us the memory and freshness of the test tour. It is my humble submission that a tour will always be printed in the minds of those involved if activities are included where participants are involved in the actual process of doing what that particular tourist site is known for. It is also worthwhile to note that it can make one to discover a hidden talent.”

One of the girls wrote:

“This was my best part of the treat – the curio work. I was able to view various products made of things that may be considered as waste. This showed the art of invention in man. Also, we were able to make something for ourselves. Here we were able to learn the art of patience and also had something tangible to remember this great day.”

The beads were very small, and for elder people this kind of activity might be tricky, but for this group it worked out fine. The mother mentioned that her girl wanted to bring some material home to continue
making things, but the guide said they were not for sale. However it might be a good idea to develop craft packages that tourists can buy and bring home.

The group spent quite some time at the craft station (two hours) and after a while some of the kids stopped making craft and started to run around the beach. It also took a bit too long to round the event off, making the following community tour delayed.

During the community tour the focus was on the Indian settlers that came to build the railway, and it was mentioned that Dunga is an Indian word for “Deep place of water.” There were much more discussions between the tourists and guide on this part, which is good since it gives more space for interaction. We passed an old Indian house and the father touched it. When he did that, some others did as well. The guide said the Indian houses look different from the Luos’ inside. The father revealed some thoughts about the habitats in his comments afterwards: “The one thing I wondered was why this Indian settlement and architectural design was not preserved as a historical site as it has been done elsewhere.” He also found the homesteads interesting to develop:

“It would be a very good thing to explore how to involve some of the homesteads as part and parcel of the Dunga community tourist site. This will see a corporation that will be beneficial to the Dunga community as well as the community running the Dunga tourist site.”

The mother seemed to agree in some sense and wrote in her comments that it is important that everybody in the community is sensitized, understands the value of the place and are a part of the development of tourism. However she was concerned about the sustainability aspects:

“It was noticed that Dunga environment has a great potential for ecotourism from existing natural habitats and ancient homes and people and other activities. However, this area must be gazetted to protect it from haphazard development...”

During the tour there was also a stop under a fig tree in the village where it was told that it is an important meeting point where the village solves disputes and conflicts. Sometimes there are monkeys climbing in the tree and eating the fruits. The guide also mentioned the fig tree on the beach (which we passed before) and just next to that tree they built the community hall as a continuation and symbol of the old days.

From a viewpoint further in the village the tourists could see the wetlands spreading out beneath. The guide explained that the papyrus fields in the wetlands are big, stretching all the way to Nyakach, making an important breeding area for many types of fish. Someone asked if there is a risk of harvesting too much papyrus, but the guide said they are fast growing and that he didn't think there is a problem. If you take one up, there is a new one coming, he said. However the mother's concern for this is shown in her notes. She sees the development taking place as a great threat to biological sustainability in forms of habitats, animals and plants: “Sooner or later all the plants of tourist interest will be gone”. She stated that the county government must see to that there are physical development plans and that people are “sensitized on environmental issues”.

We came up to another viewpoint, with one of the best views in Dunga, overlooking the lake. The story about the old railway was told nicely. This was the quarry where they got the material for building the railway. In 1963 the lake was overflowed by rains (known as mvua ya Uhuru) and thereby also the railway. You couldn’t get to Dunga without a boat, the guide said. The lake was on one side and the wetlands on the other. This is an interesting story that could be investigated further. At Railway Museum in Nairobi there is probably information about it, as well as at the National Museum. For example in the National Museum there is photograph of when Florence Preston puts the last nail in the railway in Kisumu.
The group walked down the quarry to the lakeshore. There were fishnets laid out on the ground to dry and get mended. We were told that the nile perch is a big and aggressive fish and that is why you can see a lot of mending been made on the nets. We came to a Luo polygam homestead where the houses are placed in the traditional way. The guide told a short story about the homestead and the polygamy, which was appropriate for the Kenyan participants who were probably acquainted with it. The village tour ended with a walk in the edge of the papyrus fields.

The tour was rounded up where it started at five o’clock in the pedagogical centre, and it all finished with a group photo, taken by the earth bench. Overall, the group seemed to have had a nice day, as the following additional comments show:

“My day had memorable experience, it has a refreshing feeling, aesthetic beauty of lake gives a soothing feeling, reenergizing and sensitizes one of importance of natural environment. It gives a satisfactory expedition; and one becomes attracted to make future visits. It has a potential for ecotourism as long as a few improvements are made.”

“What we liked: boat ride; making earrings and bracelets, playing; the people are friendly; tour guides are good. But there is no playground for children, so we missed to play with our new friends”.

“It was a great trip, great birds, great company, and nice food. Thanks for involving us in the test tour we learnt a lot and it has left us with an impression of Dunga community and environs. The experience was refreshing, relaxing and energizing to the mind and soul”.

“This is the day that I will never forget”
International/Swedish group - adults

The first tour showed that having a lead tour guide throughout the day would make the tour more coherent, a concept that was tested in this second test tour. When the eight Swedish tourists (all around 40 to 65 years old) arrived in a jeep at nine in the morning, the lead guide greeted the tourists immediately as they drove through the gate and said in a loud and clear voice “Good morning, Karibu Karibu, feel most welcome”, and invited them into the pedagogical centre where the introduction was continued: “Good morning. I’m Samuel. Today you will experience a day in Dunga”. It was mentioned that Dunga is a fishing village and that most people belong to the Luo tribe, that the day will contain a boat tour and lunch with the traditional osuga; “Hope you will find it delicious”, and that there is an Ecosan toilet behind the centre.

One of the tourists mentioned that the introduction was very good, whilst others wished for more information. As an example they would have wanted general information about what the package included (e.g. food and drinks), when the tour was supposed to end, and at what times it would be possible to go to the toilet. One tourist wrote in her comments that when you arrive you come there because you are interested, but you also wonder if the community are okay with tourists walking through their village and if they will benefit from her visit. Her recommendation was that those issues could be addressed in the introduction. Another tourist puts similar issues in another context, which could also be used in an introduction; she wrote that the main interesting experiences were to get a close insight in the way people live in Dunga, to get insights in challenges such as environmental issues, poverty and sustenance, as well as to solutions tested by the community to address those issues. The same person also thought it was important to show that “the money earned from tourism is spread out among all members of the community, especially among women and children”. This is connected to the transformative capacity of tourism where income from tourism is used to improve the lives of residents in Dunga.

When walking out of the centre the tourists saw the solar lamps and asked the guide about them. He gave some information and then led them down to the sausage tree where the story of the funeral ceremony and that the fruits are used for making medicine and a local brew was told. The tourists seemed intrigued and said to each other that this is something that they had not seen before, and one later said:

“I will never forget the story about the sausage tree!”

Image 22. The sausage tree, something the tourists had never seen before.
After this the guide mentioned the fishermen cooperative and the BMU on the way to the fish banda. Then the lead guide introduced another guide: “I will hand you over to Tobias”. The group stood by a table in the banda where tilapia, nile perch and a big lungfish were laid out. The guide spoke loud enough so that everybody could hear but they found it a bit hard to follow everything. It was clear that the guide had a lot of knowledge about the fish. A story was told about the lungfish, that originally came from an island close by, and that it is often cooked by men just after marriage to show the wife his love. The lead guide joined again and took the group over to the fishmongers. However as on the previous test tour the tour guides did the talking instead of the fishmongers. The tourists later mentioned that it would have been nice to listen to the fishmonger’s own stories, which also would have given a better gender perspective.

The group was then led to the beach where another guide gave a talk about the local birds, such as the Hammerkopf, which was told to be the queen of birds. Here the group was standing right in the blaring sun and they soon started to put hats and sunscreen on. It was noticeable that they were not used to this climate. They mentioned later that they would have listened much better if they would have been standing in the shade. The guide spoke loud enough but the tourists had a hard time understanding everything, especially when they were being told about birds that they could not see.

The lead guide joined the group again mentioning that it was time for the boat ride, explaining that there are two boats to choose from; one would go for fishing and one for bird watching. The bag of recycled polythene bags as well as the locally made tray of water hyacinths were carried on-board with water, coffee and mandazi. Some of the tourists had trouble getting into the boats, and one of them tripped.
In the boat aimed for bird watching one of the tourists immediately commented that it was nice to get out on the water. The two guides sat in each ends of the boats and sometimes talked over each other. The tourists were told about the birds, and there was a good interaction with the tourists who asked a lot of questions. They seemed to especially appreciate the information concerning the environmental issues. For example, the discussion of the papyrus that is used to make baskets and mats were interesting since the community has been advised to use it sensibly. Other examples are the mangrove tree, which is used to make boats as well as they provide a good environment for the fishes, and the water lilies that purifies the water. One of the tourists asked if the bag that the bottles were placed in was recycled, and she seemed to like the fact that it was made of recycled polythene bags. The guides pointed out that the fishermen were coming back from their fishing trips, and the boats passed several fishermen working with different fishing techniques on different types of boats, for example a raft made of mangrove. Here there could have been a bit more interaction and the guides could possibly have interacted more with the fishermen by asking them some questions. The boat drove quite close to the shore and there were lots of people on the beach, washing clothes and kitchen utensils, drying whitebait and swimming. This gives a good insight to the life of the community, however one tourist was concerned that the adults that were swimming might not like the fact that they were driving so close.

Some of the trees that are on the beach were mentioned and one of the guides talked about the sausage tree, a story that the tourist had already been told. Here it is important the whole tour guide group is involved in the planning so that the tour is synced and so that everybody knows what everybody will talk about, to avoid double information. During the ride hippos were spotted at several occasions, however as in the previous tour there could have been more of storytelling.

The coffee and mandazis were served a bit late, but it was a greatly appreciated feature. In the middle of the boat ride the engine stopped, since the boat had run in to some nets that were not marked out correctly. The guides mentioned that this is a problem that some people lay out illegal nets that are impossible to spot. It would have been good if one of the guides had carried a small pocket knife. However this stop also revealed another important thought from one of the tourists, who wrote in her notes:

“When we accidentally run into some unmarked fishing nets we had a quiet moment very close to land, I appreciated that, a moment where you get to touch the hippo grass and listen to the silence.”

The other group that went for fishing did not get any fish, and it was mentioned by the guides that it might be because it was too late in the day. However the participants said afterwards that it was so nice anyway on the lake, especially since they stopped the boat often so that they could relax, listen to the guides’ stories and feel the cool breeze.
After the boat ride the whole group gathered again for lunch, and were taken to the kitchen of Casablanca where they were asked how they liked their fish. Most of them wanted it grilled. Almost the whole group wanted to visit the toilet however no one knew where it was. It could be appropriate to place one more signpost in this area that indicates where the outdoor toilet is. After using the toilet on the back of the restaurant the tourists thought it needed some improvement, especially since it is placed close to the restaurants. The tourists washed their hands by the water tank however there was no soap. In one of the workshops it was suggested that one of the tourists could get the task of carrying the water and soap around the group, which could be considered to be used at lunch.

The group sat down for a while until the lead guide said that it was time to try to make brown ugali. Two of the tourists helped stirring the pot. This livened up the atmosphere, however the tourists were standing on the wrong side of the stove and one of them got a burning piece of wood on her foot. This is definitely a good activity but needs to be synced better. There could also be a short story about the ugali told by the fishmongers. For example they could explain what ingredients are traditionally used, how and when you eat it, and in which area the tradition of eating it is spread.

Image 26. Tourist interacting by trying to cook brown ugali.

It took quite some time for the food to arrive, and when it did most of the fishes were fried although almost all had ordered grilled. Something happened with the grilled fish, which is understandable since it is not commonly ordered. However it might be a good idea to try it more often, since more and more people try to eat healthily, as was noticed in the previous tour where boiled fish was preferred. A suggestion is also to initiate a closer collaboration with the local restaurants to get them more involved in the interaction with tourists. Setting a time for how long the lunch should take and to inform the tourists about it could also be appropriate, to prevent that some people are sitting and waiting whilst others buy more drinks.

After lunch it was time for the craft activity. The guide and craftsman who was in charge of the craft had prepared for rope and paper making and weaving activities together with a craftswoman and her son. Each activity was supposed to take 15-20 minutes and the group was divided in three groups, rotating between the activities. On the weaving station the group was shown how to weave a picnic basket, and they then got to try themselves in turns. One of the participants said that the basket could serve well for keeping laundry. They all liked the basket, but realized it would be too complicated to bring it home on the flight back to Sweden. A male participant who is interested in sailor knots started to tie such knots of the water hyacinth rope. One of the craftsmen showed an interest and they started to tie knots together. This sharing of knowledge through interaction between tourists and guides is important and interesting for both parts and could be developed further by offering more interactive activities. A similar example
18

comes from the paper-making station where one of the craftsmen later mentioned how the tourists had asked if they could make the paper without using chemicals, which got him thinking of how this could be done. Here the participants were also able to bring the paper sheets back home in the end of the day when they had dried in the sun. This is a nice way of getting a souvenir from the day, keeping the memory of the activity and Dunga vivid.

On the rope-making station a device to make the ropes that Helena Hansson’s (PhD student in the KLIP core group) father had made in Sweden was used, as well as textile strips from worn-out clothes and orange-coloured plastic tapes. One of the tourists mentioned that the plastic tapes are not very environmentally friendly but that the ropes are nice. Used plastic bags or water hyacinths would have been better in a way, but making ropes out them is a bit tricky for a beginner, the guide said. Also here the tourists brought the ropes home as memories, and one of the tourists mentioned; “using paper and other recycled material for making bracelets gives a symbolic value”.

The rotation of the groups did not work perfectly. The weaving group didn’t change stations in time, which led to that two groups had extra time in the end. However this also meant that they had time to buy some souvenirs. The tourists appreciated all the activities and one of them wrote in her comments:

“The activities at the beach, making paper, ropes and baskets were well organized... Much of the positive experience or flavour came out of the energy from Steven, the guy in charge. He made an impression by being so open and interested in learning.”

As with the previous tour the rounding of part of the craft activities took a bit too long. The lead guide began the next part by saying: “we are going for the last segment of this day in Dunga” and introduced the “village expert”, who said that they were going to see how the Luos live and used to live in the old days. It was good that the national and international tourists each got adapted approaches on the village tour, to suit their interests.

The group got a little scattered on the way through the village, probably because people were tired. Some walked faster and some slower, talking to each other and with the guide. Sometimes it was hard to hear the guide, even though he spoke with a clear and loud voice. One of the tourists who work with tour guiding is Sweden mentioned later that when guiding outside small aspects such as the direction of the wind can make it hard for the tourists to hear the guide, which can be adjusted by standing close and by
the right side of the tourists. An option is also to split the group in two for the village walk, at least if this part is held in the afternoon.

A fisherman was mending his nets outside his house, which was a nice scene. The guide told the story of the buildings around him which were placed in the traditional polygamy way. He explained the wives’ and the sons’ huts positions in relation to the main building, the “boma”. This is very special to international tourists, who are interested in how people live their lives. The story could be further developed by for example adding a visual map. Moving on, the group passed a house where there was fish lying on a grate. The guide took down the grate so that everyone could see the fish and explained that when the fish season is high the fish is dried in the sun for the low season. This openness to what happens at each location at the time was nice. You get the feeling that it is not arranged which gives a sense of that you are experiencing something that others will never see.

![Image 30. Drying of fish in the sun](image)

At one homestead there was a small house, a burial place for the village guide’s relative. He had eight wives and was thereby very rich. Sometimes the house is used for meetings with the dead person, the guide explained. The story went that if you call the name of the dead person you are able to get in touch with him. Another Luo tradition is the naming of their children after what time of the day they are born. A boy born in the day is named Onyango and if it is a girl her name will be Anyango. The guide asked one of the tourists what time of the day she was born. She said at one o’clock in the night. “Then your name would be Atieno”. He gave the story of himself being a little baby. He used to cry a lot, so he was named Owiti. This close interaction and involvement in the guide’s own life made the participants feel a connection with the place and the guide. One of them wrote in her comments:

“The guides’ stories about their families and relatives were rewarding and strengthened the understanding of the customs of the Luo people.”

Moving on, the guide followed the track he started with traditions and myths. He told a story about a magician who died twenty years ago. You could go to him if you had an enemy or if you wanted to heal yourself or someone else from sickness. As if by coincidence, we arrived at a little house where this man used to have snakes in a cellar. If you went down to the snakes they could heal your sickness. The guide pointed out that there were no snakes there now. Some of the tourists went down the stairs. One of them who is afraid of insects kept this memory during the whole week, how she had dared to climb down there despite being a bit scared that she would find insects. This part of the tour was nice since you could choose if you wanted to go in or not, and having an extraordinary experience makes one remember the
place. Although sometimes it might get too scary if you don’t know what to expect. A thorough explanation of what is going to happen might be relevant to add.

As on the previous tour, the group was taken to the viewpoint by the quarry. Papyrus mats were laid out on the ground close to the edge of the quarry. This was not told to the tourist, however they would probably have liked to know it and it would have added even more value to the tour. If a story like that is told an idea could also be to sell the mats in the shop. At this point the tourists were quite tired and thought that it felt good to sit down on the mats and have a coffee break. One of the comments from the tourists from this part is that she would have liked to know more about the Kenyan coffee and tea culture since in Sweden, Kenyan coffee is seen to be of very good quality. She wondered if there are rituals connected to it: “How do you drink your coffee?”. By telling the story about how mixed tea is prepared tourist might become interested in trying it, rather than sticking to how they are used to drink it at home. Another idea is to also tell a little something about the ground nuts that were served, for example where and how they are grown and if they are used in cooking. Other ideas from this part of the tour are to add hand washing or other sanitation facilities, and to join the tourists sitting on the mats. The latter would give an opportunity for small talk and further questions, which is important for the total experience.

Image 31. Coffee break on papyrus mats with a nice view of the lake.

During the coffee break a village elder was introduced to the tourist group. He told a story in Luo and the guide translated it for the tourists, which was a nice way to involve the local community in the tour. The story in itself is good; it is about the coffee being transported from Uganda to Kenya in 1970’s when Idi Amin was the dictator of Uganda. Men from Dunga risked their lives to get the coffee from Uganda to Dunga on the lake. It was very dangerous and six of the storyteller’s best friends were killed. The tourists found it a bit hard to follow the story, and since it is an important story it can be good to practice how it can be performed.
The story of coffee smuggling from Uganda is told by a village elder.

The village guide thanked for the time spent and left room for the lead guide, who saw to that the other guide got an applause. The tourists thought that the tour was finished, however the lead guide took them over to the boat builders, as the last thing. One of the tourists is very interested in boat building and appreciated this stop a lot, however it is important to decide amongst the guide group which is the last stop, and also to pose questions to tourists to see if they might be too tired for another stop. The two guides took turns in guiding under the umbrella tree where the boat builders usually sit. Today we were late, so the boat builders had gone home. This part would be better earlier on the tour so that the boat builders could be part of the tour and the tourists would be less distracted and tired.

The tour finished in the pedagogical centre where it started. The papers from the paper-making activity had been brought from the beach and the crafts guide was there to help out in taking the paper off the frames. One of the female participants who is an artist wanted to have one paper to paint on at home.

Overall the tourists viewed their visit in Dunga as an overwhelming and unique experience that allowed them to get a glimpse into the local culture. They also appreciated the work done by the guides, and the use of a lead guide that handed the guiding over throughout the day. This is a note from one of the tourists:

“You never experience a community so close on your own. It was unique in that way.”

Most of the participants in the international test tour have long experience of working with tourism or sustainability issues and in their notes they gave some suggestions for how the tour can be developed further, which will be brought up in the next section, under the heading Implications for development.
Implications for development

The test tours showed a great potential on further development of packaged tours in Dunga. In this section some of the suggestions and ideas that came up from observations and the tourists journal notes are further discussed, as well as aspects that are important to think about when you are developing ecotourism. For example, setting up strategies together with the community, how to link Dunga to the Kisumu environs, the region and other parts of the country. Finally we will also briefly mention the concept of transformative tourism that could be interesting for Dunga to look at.

Refinement of a day in Dunga

The test tours clearly showed that Dunga have a number of diversified qualities that tourists are interested in experiencing, and in general it is mostly about fine-tuning the offerings.

One area is information about time and contents of packages. It is important to define what is included in a package, the duration of those activities and the whole tour. The tourists will then know what to expect and what they are paying for, and the people involved from Dunga, such as guides, receptionists and community members, will know the procedure so that they know what is expected from them and will be able to prepare in advance. These refinements will come naturally as more tours are performed, but a suggestion is to start writing down what is included in the tours, and perhaps put it up on the notice board at the pedagogical centre, in a “tour folder”, in brochures and on the Facebook page. This would also make it easy to give tourists information before their arrival. In such material an idea would be to use quotes about previous tourists experiences, such as you can find in this report.

The refinement of the tour content is about small adjustments of things that didn’t work out perfect on the test tours. For example, the food activities need to be improved when it comes to safety and health issues, quality of food and leadership (referring to international tour). It is also about developing the storytelling part so that the visitors understand the stories clearly and that all the guides tell the same versions of the stories and maybe also connect them to each other. You can also include the tourists in the story by for example letting them sing songs, develop the story themselves or touch or smell things. Also a more conscious interaction could be performed by asking tourists questions and letting the tourists be part of the experience by for example helping out with washing hands before lunch. In the storytelling books provided at the pedagogical centre you will find several storytelling exercises that can be done in groups or individually. Another aspect to think about is that people intoxicated by alcohol should avoid direct contact with tourists. The cleanliness of the place is very important, as has been pointed out earlier. The tourists noted that the roads, especially from the office to the beach need to be cleaned up. One of them wrote in the report that a clean up would be highly visible and “show people interested in transformative capacity of tourism that the money made from tourism is used to improve the lives at Dunga.”

Developing new tours

When developing the packages from the test tours and when developing new packages an idea is the use the workshop tool from “a Day in Dunga”. Think of tours for different groups, considering interests, themes, ages, gender, nationality, as well as tours for shorter or longer stays, for high and low season etcetera.
The international tourists thought the tour was a little bit too long and sometimes the activities were not finished off in time. One idea would be to offer both half and full day tours. Also the test tour participants suggested a modular system. With this type of thinking, the packages offered could consist of pre-set modules of for example food, boat ride, village walk, craft activities, or wetland walk. Then each of the activities in a module might be shallow or deep. For example food can be just eating fish where the fishmonger prepares it, having a buffet dinner at Fabo, or preparing the food from the fishing trip and then eat it. Thinking in modules also makes it easier for the customers to put together their own packages according to needs and desires.

Making more test tours for different groups is also an option. How about offering test tours for hotel owners and travel agencies? Or tours for groups where the participants are interviewed or asked to write something about it afterwards? Another possibility is to try out new tours within the tour guide organisation, giving each other feedback on the performance. This might also be a way to introduce new members of Dectta.

**The Kisumu context**

Before the test tours there had been a suggestion that the tourists could be met up when arriving on the road to Dunga and arrange so that they could try boda-boda bicycles, as a way to show the local tradition and an eco friendly option. This was not tried in this tour however it is an idea that could be tested at a later stage. Another idea would be to end or start the tour with a boat ride, where tourists can be picked up or dropped off somewhere along the shore, for example at Kiboko bay. Another option in the long run is to include stops on islands in the lake or visits to Impala park or other attractions.

During their stay in Kisumu the Swedish group (from the test tour) also spent some time in town where they for example stayed at Imperial hotel and visited Kibuye market. Here it would be interesting to see if Dunga in collaboration with other local tourism stakeholders can develop some type of “Kisumu experience”. This could start as collaboration with local hotels, by having brochures about Dunga packages in their receptions, and also to inform the hotel staff about the packages so that they can direct tourists. In the longer perspective a possibility is to form collaborations where stakeholders from Kisumu work together as a destination, since it make it easier to attract tourist if you as a city can offer a full experience with diverse activities.
Dunga in the larger tourism context

You could also look at an even larger perspective and think about how Dunga and Kisumu could connect to the surrounding region and other parts of Kenya. For example how can we think about tours in Western region or in the country? Could Dunga and Kisumu be a part of organised tours that starts in Kisumu followed with for example Masai Mara and Mombasa or Lamu. Three main stops like this would give tourists a diversified package. In Masai Mara they would get to see the rich wildlife, however it is a kind of closed environment from the “real world”, an aspect that Kisumu and Dunga have the possibility to provide with. One of the international tourists saw it as coming to the “Real Africa” when she came to Kisumu and Dunga, and she suggested promoting East Africa more as a tourist destination. Another interesting idea to think about is how the lake can be a connection point to for example Tanzania and Uganda, if public transport on the lake was revived.

These are big concepts, but if the county would bring this issue up then Dunga should be a part of the discussion.

Setting up strategies

When developing tourism in areas where people live, there is a risk of interfering with people’s lives. One of the international tourists thought the village tour was interesting and unique, but she also thought:

"I do feel a bit reluctant about looking into people's lives without them inviting me. Not everyone seemed to appreciate us being there. More involvement is needed. We should not look at the Luo people's lives; we should share some of their experiences. I do not know how.”

A comment from another tourist was that there should be a “better acceptance of walking through the village”. A suggestion was to work with a small number of families that actively said yes. They also suggest bringing about real conversations between tourists and villagers. In the interviews with the tour guides, one of them agreed: “It is not good to cross in the middle of somebody’s home (...) I think even the visitor might feel, it must have the feeling that ah, I’m not welcome. Just standing watching.”

From the international tourists’ point of view, the absence of women and getting to know about women’s lives were missing in the tour. One way of doing this could be to include more female guides, or increased interaction in other settings, for example tasks performed by women. As one of the international tourists put it “Increased interaction with the women of the village would enhance the product and the local community. This is very important from a sustainability perspective.” An opportunity might be for women talk with the tourists while working on the beach, scaling the fish for example. When we proposed that in an interview, a woman from the community said: “Yeah, it will be good. Just make friends.” On the village tour, the use of cameras also came up. It would be good to know when it is OK to take photos or not.

All the above stated things could be handled by inviting community members to a big meeting. Families that are interested in participating in tourism activities could then sign up, routes for walking could be decided and issues like rules for taking photos could be stated.

Tourism charges

It is always difficult to set appropriate charges for services as opposed to tangible products. The price tested on the national tour was considered high for the average local tourists, but affordable to a high-level working class group, according to one of the adults in the group.

On the international tour, the tested price was 5 000 KSH per person. This seemed to be considered too high, but mainly because it was stated that it was a test tour. A test tour might be considered having a lower price since the full version of the tour is not set. As replacement of money, the tourist can be asked to be interviewed or write something about their perceptions after the tour. However this does not mean that 5 000 KSH is too much for a full day. In comparison a day tour in Naivasha (including a boat trip and car drive around the lake) can cost up to 7 000 KSH.
An option in order to get more income from a tour is to sell products, especially the kinds that are closely linked to the activities and the environment. One suggestion mentioned is papyrus mats and picnic baskets made of water hyacinths. Others could be DIY-packages with for example material for making necklaces or similar products, or ready-made kits including bird watching utensils like books, drinks and binoculars. The basket, binoculars and book could be returned after the day or bought if the tourists feel they want to. The tourists could also buy the crafts they produce depending on how much material they use - they don’t have to be included in the package.

**Development through collaborations**

There are several possible collaborations with partners in Kisumu and its environs. Through KLIP, there are student projects that are of interest for Dunga. As an example, for several years master students from Chalmers and Joost have had projects in Kisumu. One of them is the one that Joshua Wanga, who is now a PhD student at Joost and KLIP, performed with some student colleagues in Dunga in 2012. The SLU (Swedish Agricultural University) is another partner that KLIP has collaborations with. While this text is written, there is a student from SLU doing a project in landscape architecture from SLU. The nice thing is that those projects often work close to reality, prototyping ideas for development. The road to Dunga is an example of a project, which the students could work with.

![Image 35. Developing the road to Dunga into a positive experience is a possible student project.](image)

Ongoing collaborations with for example LVTA could also deepen, also including the county government, hotels and tourist organisations as stated above. There are several examples in this document that could be further developed in collaborations. One is the craft group who could work further on concepts for schoolchildren that visit Dunga almost every day. This could be done through applying for funding together with partners as for example Ecofinder. Other partners that the craft group has contacts with are Business Sweden and Diakonia.
The concept of transformative tourism
There is an emerging concept in tourism named transformative tourism or transformative ecotourism. One of the participants in the international test tour is a sustainability researcher, and she thought the concept could be something worth taking a closer look at for Dunga. The idea behind transformative tourism is that you make it visible for the tourists that their visit can change the society in a positive way. This can involve for example that they take part in actions that aims to improve certain aspects, as well as it is about learning; tourists and the local community engage in activities together and learn from each other. To some extent you are already performing this in Dunga, although there could be further development of those actions. It could also be interesting to develop the concept in new areas. An opportunity is also to use the concept in marketing, as well as to talk about it during tours.