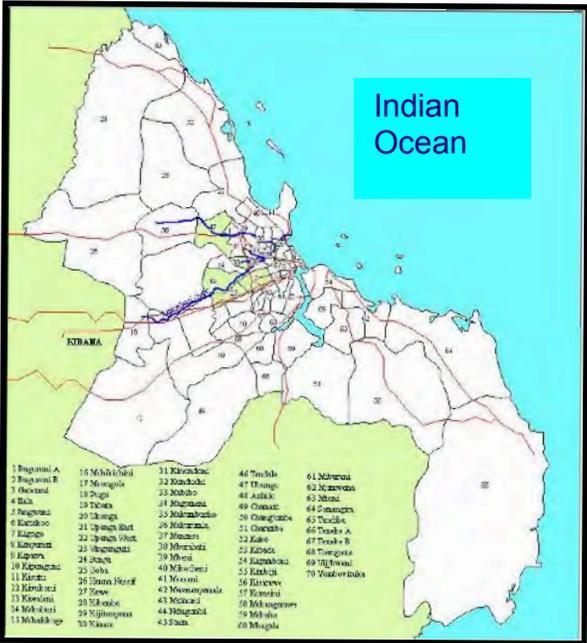


Project Completion Report:
Msimbazi River Action Network



• **Project Details:**

Location:	Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Contaminant:	Heavy metals, biological waste
Project Duration:	November 2004 – February 2005
Project Cost:	\$4,000
Implementing Partners	MRAN (Msimbazi River Action Network); EMT (Environmental Management Trust)
Other Partners:	



- **Background and Scope:**

The Msimbazi river flows across Dar es Salaam City from the higher areas of Kisarawe in the Coastal region and discharges into the Indian Ocean. Because of its location, the river has been an important resource for residents in the Dar es Salaam city in various ways. Additionally, the river has been abused by different sectors as a dumping site for effluent and other pollutants produced by the city. As a consequence of the high levels of pollution, the river's water quality has sharply decreased, and is no longer safe for consumption, domestic uses, or even irrigational uses.

Studies have indicated high levels of heavy metal in the river, run-off from local industry. Additionally, toxins in the river are also attributable to the presence of a waste dump site besides the river in Vingunguti area, which continually leaks greater and greater degrees of effluent into the water. A local abattoir located near the river is another significant source of discharge into the water. Sources of pollution from domestic households include poor sanitation systems mainly from septic tank and pit latrines that are used by about 85% of the city population. Agricultural activities using manure and fertilizers both in the basin and at the beds of the river have made the pollution problem more complicated. Ultimately, it is clear that the sources of pollution impacting the river are quite numerous and diverse.

So far, several stakeholder groups have gotten involved with this issue. Stakeholder groups, each with a particular focus, have taken the first steps towards intervening in this clear environmental hazard. For example, LEAT successfully filed a case in court to forbid the dumping of waste in the Vingunguti area. Enviropro, another Dar es Salaam based organization, worked to improve the abattoir. Such efforts are isolated however, and primarily prevent further contamination more than remediate the problem such that it currently exists. It is necessary at this point to synchronize the efforts of all interested parties, to maximize their overall effect.

- **Project Metrics and Results:**

The general objectives of the network that was developed were to clean the Msimbazi river and prevent future pollution. Specifically the objectives of the network were:

- (i) Identify all Msimbazi river stakeholders;
- (ii) Categorize stakeholders and their analyses;
- (iii) Assign roles and responsibilities to each group of stakeholders;
- (iv) Facilitate and assist member of the network in cleaning the river;
- (v) Develop a monitoring mechanism to ensure compliance with rules and regulations.

The strategy to fulfill these objectives involves two phases. The first phase focuses on the identification of the various stakeholders and their analyses of the situation. The second phase focuses on workshops that allow the stakeholders to come together, share findings, and work to develop and implement the strategies necessary to complete this project.

A general observation on groups of stakeholders involved with the Msimbazi river in one way or another shows that there are basically four categories, each dealt with separately, as follows:

- i) the communities found within the basin of the Msimbazi river;
- ii) the private sector;
- iii) NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs);
- iv) the government.

The community stakeholders found that the majority of the population around the river knew the water was contaminated, naming in 100% of the cases the dumping of crude industrial waste as a major source of pollution. They found that among the communities, no initiatives had ever been pursued to curb the pollution, although it was a source of anxiety. About half of the residents considered it the duty of the government to address the pollution issue; others suggested environmental awareness campaigns, a need for local action, and housing improvements. Almost everyone showed interest in becoming a part of the envisaged network.

The private sector stakeholders showed overwhelming willingness to volunteer, helping to educate polluters on the extent of the environmental damage caused by their policies, and to discuss ideas about how to improve their impact. A third offered to contribute materials and financial support. Roughly a quarter remained ambivalent, feeling that it was the responsibility of the industries to address the pollution issues. Most were aware of the various contaminants. Some, however, did not know where the river was located and/or considered it an effective and convenient point of discharge.

It was found that NGOs and CBOs significantly contributed to improvement of Msimbazi and its basin. In most cases, CBOs were involved in alleviation of pollution emanating from haphazard disposal of solid wastes into the river through managing solid waste collection groups. All interviewed NGOs and CBOs supported the idea of a network of Msimbazi stakeholders and demonstrated willingness to participate in the network once established.

The government was considered the primary stakeholder for the purposes of this study. It was found that, according to the Environmental Management Act of 2004, the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) has all necessary power required to bring about compliance with any directive it issues; with that act in place, the council is a valuable resource in preventing pollution in Msimbazi. At the municipal level, ongoing public awareness programs exist on waste management. The Dar es Salaam Water and Sanitation Authority is currently aiming to improve sewerage services. In the health department, officers are situated at the grass roots level, vested with legal powers of suing any person or body of persons whose activities cause nuisance to the residents. Ward executive officers and the environmental and health committee are also working to improve the effluent pollution and will be valuable resources to the network of stakeholders.

- **Outcomes and Follow-up:**

Although the research was not extensive, this project focused on three major issues: Msimbazi river and its basin, problems associated with pollution, and the gathering of all stakeholders into a coordinated network. The objective of this project has been attained in that it compiled reliable information about the sources of pollutions, the perspectives of the stakeholders, current roles and activities by those involved, and determining local willingness to be involved in such a network project.

In conducting the research, it was discovered that the majority of stakeholders and community members considered it the responsibility of the government alone to remediate the contamination in the Msimbazi river. They were pessimistic about future success of the clean-up, as the government has typically not been very efficient. However, they agreed that with the combined forces of the proposed network, alleviation of the problem might be possible.

The community stakeholders know best the history of their surroundings and the sources of the water pollution. However, due to lack of efficient communication channels to the government,

this resource has previously not been effectively utilized. The private sector helps to provide these channels. NGOs and CBOs are available to work closely with communities, and their role cannot be overemphasized. The role of the government is paramount in the network, as they have the power to curb the most significant pollution issues.

Now that this relevant information has been assembled, the stakeholders must be brought together to determine the next steps. A workshop is recommended whereby all interested parties may meet and agree to officially instigate the Msimbazi River Action Network. It is also recommended that the following actions be performed after the formation of the Network:

- i) Preparation of a memorandum of understanding to be signed by all parties interested in joining the network;
- ii) Drafting of an action plan with the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder category;
- iii) Drafting of an action plan regarding the discussion and endorsement during stakeholders' future meetings;
- iv) Development of a monitoring mechanism to ensure smooth implementation of the network's activities.