

Project Update: July 2008

From 7th – 19th February and again from 6th – 16th April 2008, the project team organised and conducted 12 public lectures and sensitization meetings (Fig.1) on the importance of bats and why it is important to live with them and protect them from malicious killing. One thousand three hundred and sixty-three (1,363) pupils, 108 teachers, 27 government officials and 320 members of the Mpumalanga Mining Association benefited from lectures conducted as people were informed that bats are important because they:

- Facilitate pollination in plants, including some important economic crops;
- Eat harmful insects which transit various diseases to man, livestock and pets;
- Facilitate dispersal of seeds thereby reducing competition among plants of same species;
- Eat harmful pests of crops which could cause huge damage to our harvests and cause economic losses.

Implementation of these activities have created awareness and imparted knowledge in local communities and stakeholders on the importance of bats. Further, the activities have changed people's perceptions as many people see bats as their enemies and nuisance creatures.



Left: Mr. D. Raimondo conducting a sensitization meeting with local communities on importance of bats. Right: Dr. Jasse conducting public lecture on importance of bats and rehabilitation of degraded mines shown on the map.